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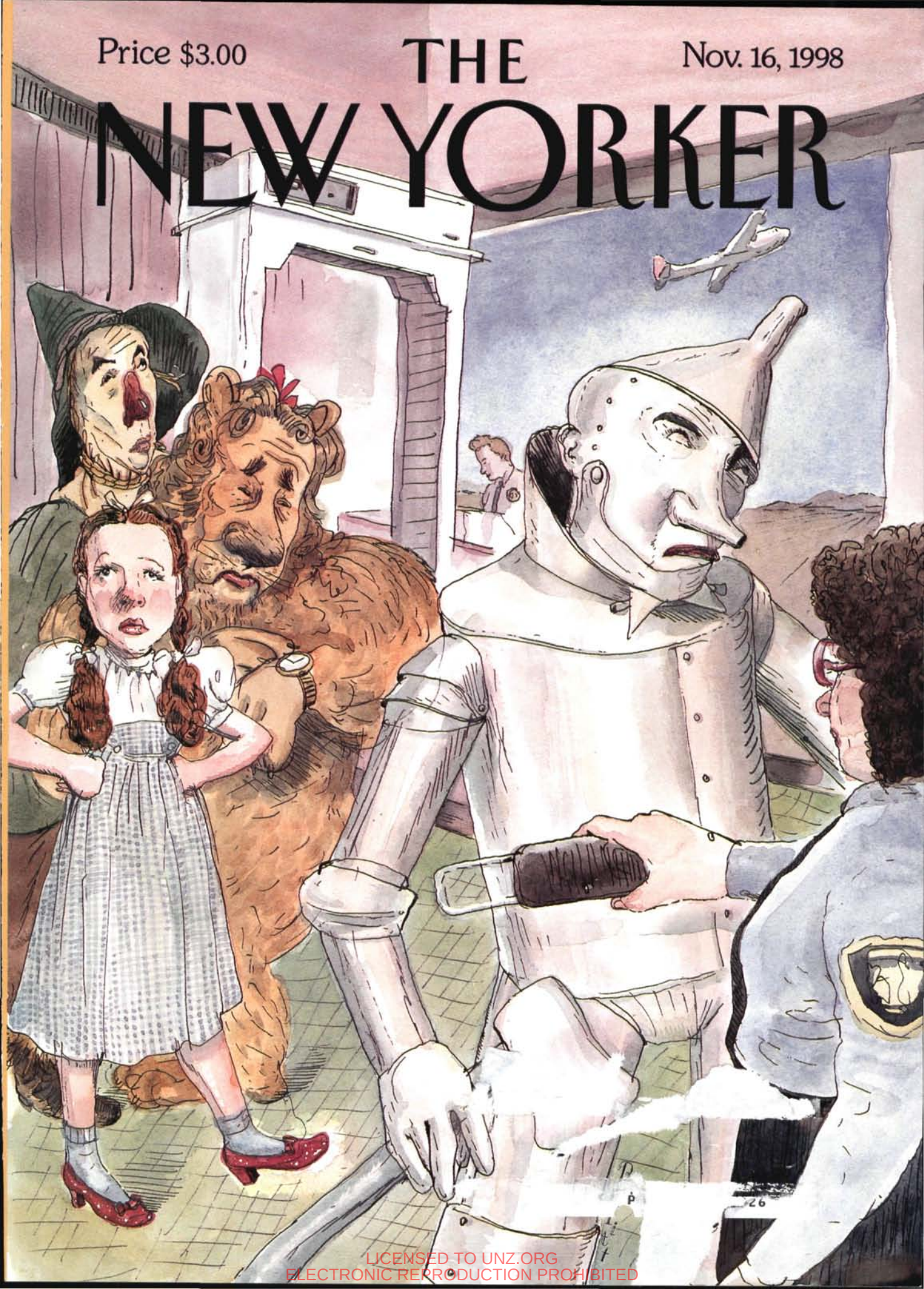
Nov. 16, 1998



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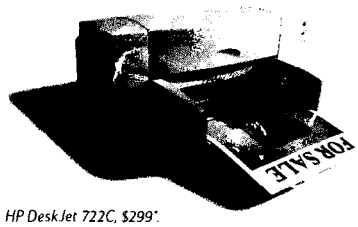

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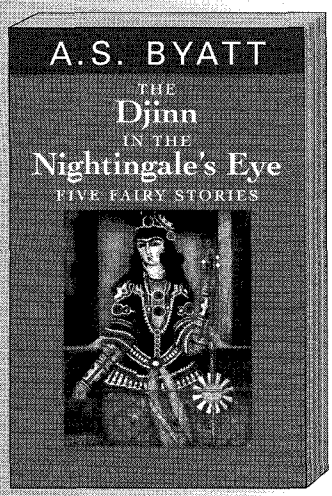

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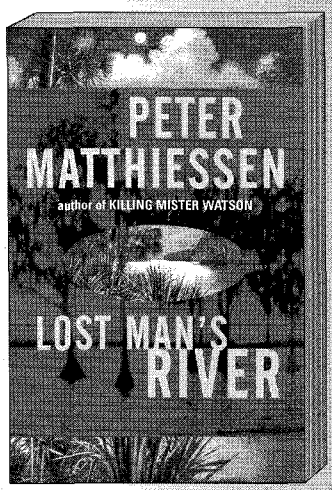

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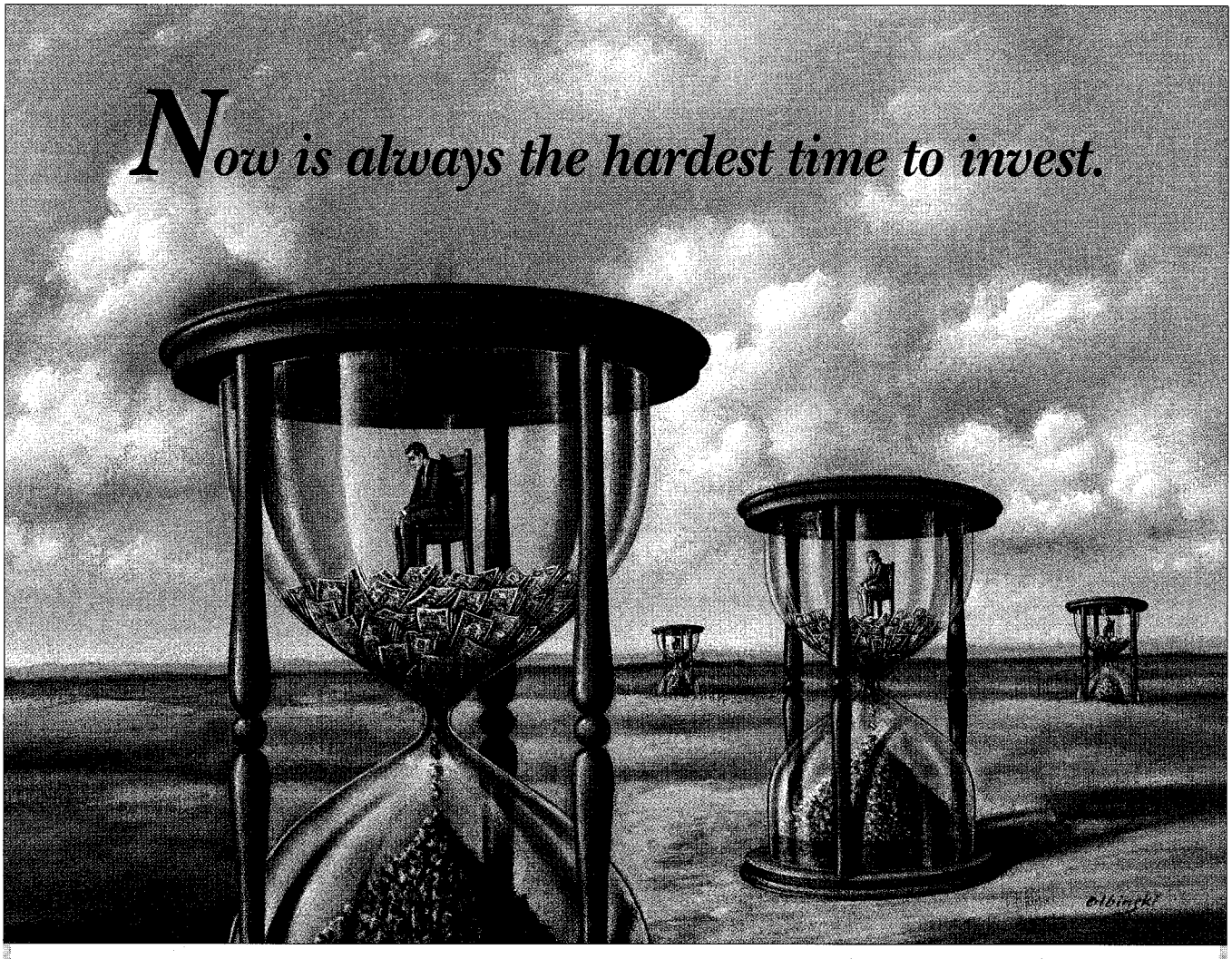

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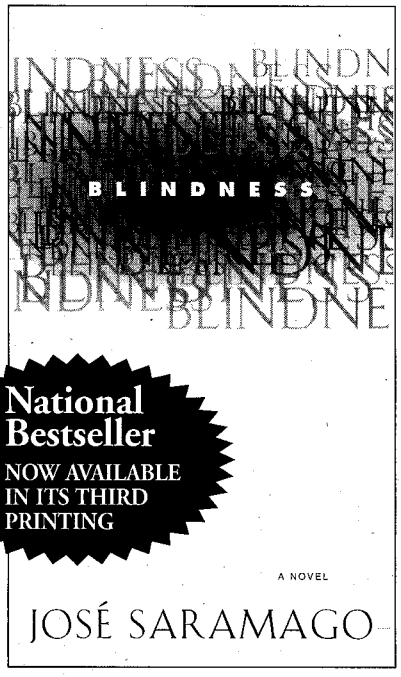

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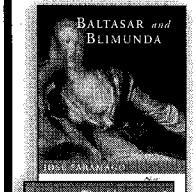

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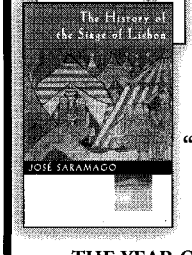

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"Gee, these new twenties look just like Monopoly money."

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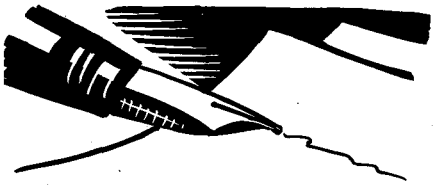

ON CLINTON'S FOLLY

Toni Morrison's claim of Clinton's "blackness" (The Talk of the Town, October 5th) is arrant nonsense. After he upbraided Sister Souljah, dismissed Joycelyn Elders, and dissed Lani Guinier, Clinton can hardly qualify as someone who is in touch with the black psyche. Moreover, given the consequences of his so-called welfare reform and his drug war—the criminalization of more black women and men—there is no way anyone could consider him a "soul brother" (though his misogyny may perhaps resonate with Snoop Doggy Dogg). It's a shame that Clinton is being hounded by another prurient Protestant good ol' boy, but it's a measure of his crass opportunism that he has so effectively fashioned himself a victim that someone as sensitive to the real victims of history as Morrison can be bamboozled.

FRAN SHOR
Detroit, Mich.

As a black man, certainly blacker even on a good day than Bill Clinton—shaved head, gold tooth, hypertension, lived in the projects—I'm offended by Toni Morrison's criteria for blackness: "single-parent household, born poor, working-class, saxophone-playing, McDonald's-and-junk-food loving." If a white person had said that... yipes.

HAROLD ORLAN WATERS, JR.
Orlando, Fla.

The "experts on human folly" commenting on Clinton in The Talk of the Town (October 5th and October 12th) reveal less about the scandal than they do about the chattering literary class. They place a wonderfully predictable emphasis on the sexual and minimize the moral and legal aspects of the matter. As James Salter put it, "There are lies that presumably cause one to be descended into Hell and lesser, even trivial ones that cannot be judged as harshly and are often, in fact, a necessity." Indeed, but one man's fib is another man's whopper. Fortunately for America, it is not left to novelists to decide such matters; we have laws that define and punish lies uttered under oath. These writers are merely the latest inheritors of the mantles of earlier eminent intellectuals like George Bernard Shaw—who, after visiting a Stalinist Soviet Union, reported that, all in all, it represented the last, best hope for mankind. Only George Orwell broke step with other writers and, later, condemned such views as dangerous nonsense. We can conclude from the misinformed, silly opinions held by this group of writers that America does not yet have a writer endowed with Orwellian insight, courage, or conscience.

PETER MACKINNON
Santa Monica, Calif.

None of the literary commentators in The Talk of the Town identify the fundamental fact that simple, breathtaking stupidity is at the heart of this whole sorry mess. Clinton may be the most intellectually gifted President to occupy the White House in recent times, but that is beside the point. Clinton was not "entrapped"; he thrust himself into a trap that was always there. He handed his enemies the sword with which they are now cutting him to pieces. It is unfortunate that our nation must suffer for so long while he gets what is coming to him for having been so dumb.

BERNARD Z. FRIEDLANDER
Bellevue, Wash.

What is this fuss about the President's lying "under oath"? His Bible-thumping attackers might note that Jesus said of oaths, in Matthew 5:34, "Swear not at all."

RICHARD S. MELVILLE
San Juan Capistrano, Calif.

CORRECTION: In Annals of Style (October 26th & November 2nd), we reported the ownership of the Trish McEvoy cosmetics company incorrectly; it is not owned by any other company.

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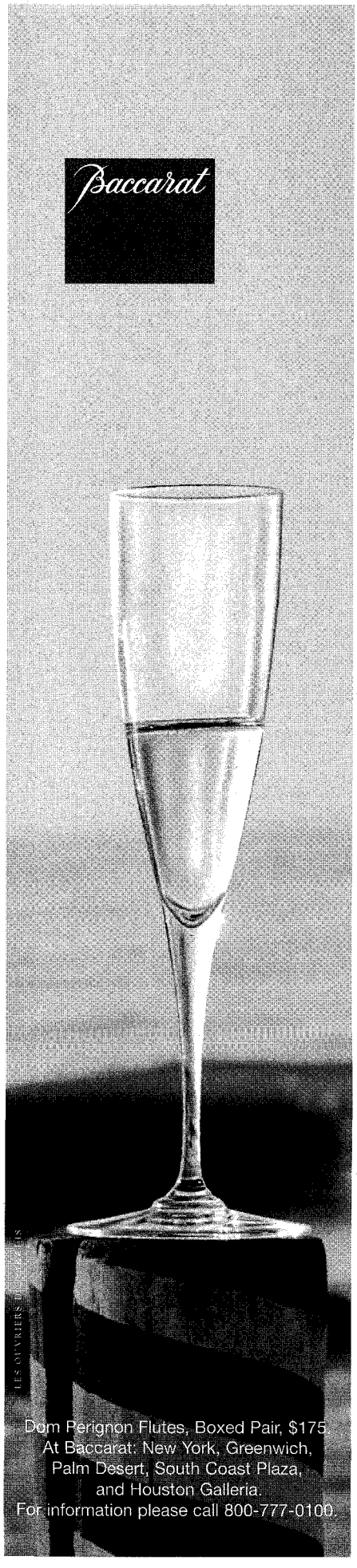

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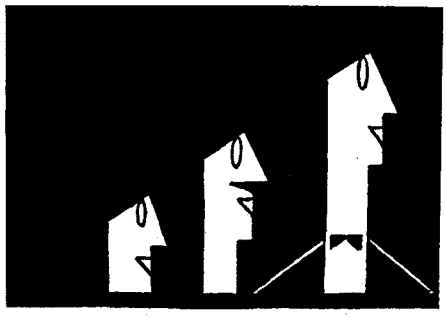

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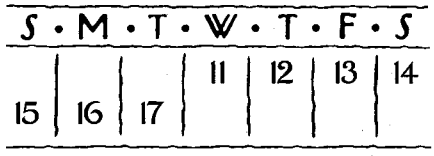
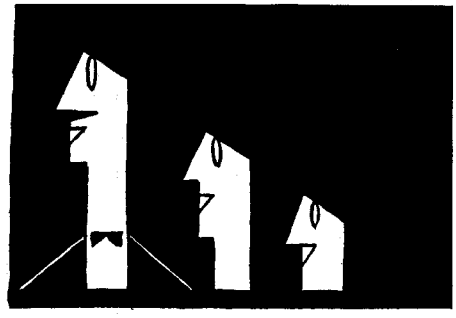




THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

All Under Heaven—Valerie Harper portrays Pearl Buck in a drama about the author's life, co-written by Ms. Harper and Dyke Garrison. In previews through Nov. 15. Opens Nov. 16 at 7. (Century Theatre, 111 W. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Anna Karenina—The British troupe Shared Experience comes to Brooklyn with a staging of Helen Edmundson's adaptation of the Tolstoy novel. Nancy Meckler is the director. Nov. 11-13 at 7:30, Nov. 14 at 2 and 7:30, and Nov. 15 at 2. (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100.)

August Snow and **Night Dance**—Repertory stagings of two plays—one set in 1937, the other in 1945—about a North Carolina family, by the novelist Reynolds Price. In previews. (Mint, 311 W. 43rd St. 315-0231.)

Carry the Tiger to the Mountain—A drama inspired by the story of Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American who was murdered by unemployed auto workers in Detroit. Written by Cherylene Lee and presented by Pan Asian Rep. Opens Nov. 12 at 8. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

Fool Moon—Clowning and music with Bill Irwin, David Shiner, and the Red Clay Ramblers, who return to Broadway for a limited engagement of their 1993 show. Previews begin Nov. 17. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Little Me—Martin Short and Faith Prince star in a revival of the 1962 musical comedy by Neil Simon (book), Cy Coleman (music), and Carolyn Leigh (lyrics). Direction and choreography are by Rob Marshall. Two previews on Nov. 11. Opens Nov. 12 at 7. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300.)

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told—A fresh version of a very old tale, by Paul Rudnick. Joanna Adler, Lisa Kron, Amy Sedaris, and Alan Tudyk are in the cast. Directed by Christopher Ashley. Previews begin Nov. 13. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

On the Town—The New York Shakespeare Festival's revival of the 1943 Comden and Green classic makes its move to Broadway. George C. Wolfe is the director, Keith Young the choreographer. In previews. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Parade—The story of Leo Frank, a Northerner wrongly convicted of murdering a child in the South in 1913, is the basis of a musical by Alfred Uhry (book) and Jason Robert Brown (music and lyrics). Directed by Harold Prince, with choreography by Patricia Birch. Previews begin Nov. 12. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

The Primary English Class—Gerald Gutierrez directs Israel Horovitz's 1976 play, which stars Didi Conn as a total-immersion English teacher. Preview on Nov. 14. Opens Nov. 15 at 7. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

The Ride Down Mt. Morgan—A bigamist (Patrick Stewart) is exposed when his two wives (Frances Conroy and Meg Gibson) visit him in the hospital, in a drama by Arthur Miller. David Esbjornson is the director. In previews through the Nov. 15 matinée. Opens that night at 7. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

The Shaughraun—The nineteenth-century playwright Dion Boucicault's melodrama, staged by the Irish Repertory Theatre. Preview on Nov. 11. Opens Nov. 12 at 7. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

Snakebit—A drama by the actor and first-time playwright David Marshall Grant, set in Hollywood. A Naked Angels production. Previews begin Nov. 12. (Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 479-7304.)

Stratford Festival at City Center—The Stratford Festival is in New York to present two plays in rotating repertory. Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing": preview on Nov. 12; opens Nov. 13 at 8. . . . ¶ Molière's "The Miser": preview on Nov. 14; opens Nov. 15 at 8. The engagement continues through Nov. 29. (131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Trainspotting—Harry Gibson's 1994 adaptation of Irvine Welsh's novel about a group of Edinburgh junkies. In previews through Nov. 14. Opens Nov. 15 at 7. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 239-6200.)

Waiting for Godot—Christopher Lloyd, Tony Shalhoub, and John Turturro take on Beckett's tragicomedy. In previews. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

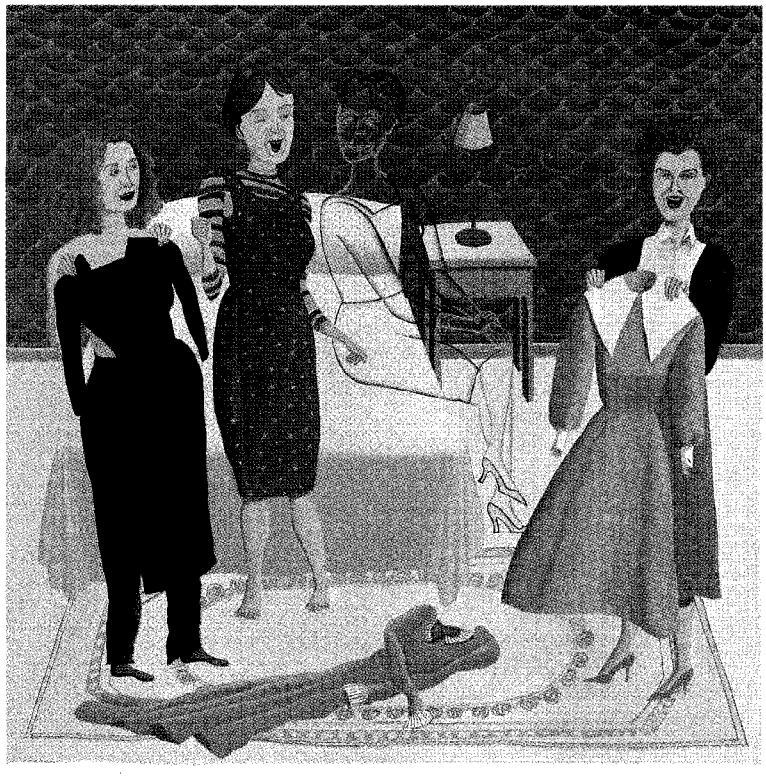
OPENED RECENTLY

Americana Absurdum—Eight actors portray thirty characters in Brian Parks's lampoon of American culture. Nov. 11-14 at 8. Continues through Nov. 28. (Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. 420-8877.)

Collected Stories—Despite a splendid performance by Uta Hagen, as an aging writer who tells her protégée (Lorca Simons) the one story about her own life which she hasn't written, this revival of Donald Margulies's 1997 drama only points out how poorly constructed the relationship between the two women is. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Communicating Doors—A wonderful farce with a fairy-tale ending, by Alan Ayckbourn. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 13th St. 239-6200.)

Corpus Christi—Terrence McNally's new play, which tells the story of a homosexual Christ-like figure, travelled a rough road before its opening. The production was cancelled after religious groups protested and the Manhattan Theatre Club staff received death threats, but within a week, armed with the support of free-speech activists, a professional security firm, and the New York City Police Department, the theatre reinstated the play. Now here it is, and a monumentally unrewarding piece of work it is, too. McNally has squandered the wealth of some very promising themes: in two (very long) hours, he manages to trivialize both sexual and religious persecution. While protesters outside the theatre despair of McNally's soul, audience members who have witnessed his plentiful gifts in the past may despair of his imagination. Slackly directed by Joe



J. Smith-Cameron, Seana Kofoed, Robin Moseley, and Suzanne Bertish, in "The Memory of Water."

KATHY OSBORN

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January 3, 1999

Philadelphia
Museum of Art

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Mantello, who four years ago staged McNally's secular and deeply spiritual "Love! Valour! Compassion!" on the very same spot. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/26 & 11/2/98.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes Nov. 29.)

The Death of Griffin Hunter—Kirk Wood Bromley's latest is a tragedy involving an idealistic U.N. undersecretary. (SoHo Rep, 46 Walker St. 501-4528. Closes Nov. 22.)

De La Guarda—Theatre as mosh pit. The Argentinean troupe herds you into a crowded space, performs undistinguished rock music, swings on ropes over your head, and splashes you until you're drenched. (Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.)

Duet! A Romantic Fable—The Adobe Theatre Company's amiable spoof of all things fifties, from lounge acts to monster movies to overwrought dream sequences, includes a very funny twist on the kiss-a-frog-meet-a-prince fairy tale. The cast is charming, and the direction, by Gregory Jackson and Erin Quinn Purcell (who also co-star) and Jeremy Dobrish, is not overwhelming—a big step in the right direction for Adobe. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 239-6200.)

Eight!—A one-man musical portrait of Henry VIII, written by and starring Steeve Arlen. (Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. 279-4200.)

Footloose—A musical adaptation of the 1984 film, co-written by Dean Pitchford (who also wrote the screenplay) and Walter Bobbie. With music by Tom Snow and lyrics by Mr. Pitchford. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Getting and Spending—Broadway is too much with us; evening and afternoon, / Waiting for the ending, we lay waste two full hours: / Little we see on the Stage that is ours; / We have given sixty dollars away—for someone, a sordid boon! (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

100 Years of Lorca—Three of the Spanish playwright's works, "The House of Bernarda Alba," "As Five Years Pass," and "The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife," performed in repertory. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—Sandra Bernhard arrives on Broadway with an updated version of her latest one-woman show. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Impossible Marriage—Holly Hunter leads the cast of Beth Henley's new drama, set in Savannah, about a young woman's marriage to a philandering older man. Stephen Wadsworth is the director. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300.)

Killer Joe—In Tracy Letts's graphic dark comedy, an American family striving for a better life—in this case, a bunch of losers living in a trailer outside Dallas—hires a hit man to help things along. Though the experience sometimes feels like being trapped in Sam Shepard's claustrophobic Nowheresville while being smacked around by Quentin Tarantino, the terrific production is so vividly unself-conscious that you hardly feel assaulted at all—in fact, you enjoy it. Scott Glenn and Amanda Plummer are billed as the stars, but the whole cast is excellent. Wilson Milam is the director. (Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.)

The Knee Desires the Dirt—Women's Project and Productions begins a season of plays about "out-of-control moms" with this one by Julie Hebert. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Krapp's Last Tape—Beckett's 1958 one-act, presented by the Irish Repertory Theatre. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes Nov. 29.)

Kuni-Leml—The Jewish Repertory Theatre presents a musical about a nineteenth-century woman whose father promises her in marriage to a Hasidic scholar. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

The Memory of Water—Three sisters are reunited by a death (their mother's), in a comedy by the British playwright Shelagh Stephenson. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

The Miser—A Pearl Theatre Company staging of Molière's comedy. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

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The Mystery of Irma Vep—It's not difficult to imagine what made this farce a hit back in 1984: the play's author and original star, the immensely gifted Charles Ludlam, who died in 1987 of complications due to AIDS. As staged and performed by that production's co-star, Everett Quinton (whose big, mournful face is just made for the movies), this version ends up a bore, despite its fairly outré conceit—"Rebecca" meets Agatha Christie meets pure camp. The quick-change business of Quinton and the energetic Stephen DeRosa (they each play at least four parts) distracts you from the occasional lame joke, but not from the strained archness and the fact that there's nothing cutting-edge going on. Drag has been out of the closet for a long time now; this is a relic of a more innocent time. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

A Night in November—A one-man drama starring Dan Gordon and written by Marie Jones, which is set on the night of the 1994 World Cup qualifying soccer match between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

The Old Settler—Leslie Uggams and Godfrey L. Simmons, Jr., portray a pair of mismatched lovers in 1943 Harlem. The play, written by John Henry Redwood, has fine characterizations and delightful jokes, but the structure is predictably melodramatic, and Mr. Redwood tosses in so many details about the neighborhood and the times that he occasionally leaves his actors stranded in a morass of facts. Nevertheless, the whole cast (which includes Lynda Gravátt and Rosalyn Coleman), under the strong direction of Harold Scott, overcomes it all. And Ms. Uggams' deft radiance paired with Mr. Simmons' eager charm is a pleasure to see. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes Nov. 29.)

Over the River and Through the Woods—In Joe DiPietro's new comedy, a young man planning his future clashes with his four Italian-American grandparents. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Pericles—The Public Theatre's staging of Shakespeare's tragicomedy. (425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes Nov. 22.)

Premium Bob—The comedy duo, in a brief engagement of their new show. Nov. 11-13 at 10. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St. 226-0051.)

Retribution—Dennis Christopher and Jack Laufer portray a pair of Auschwitz survivors, in a drama by Mark R. Shapiro. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Sakina's Restaurant—Aasif Mandvi plays six characters in his one-man exploration of the South Asian community in New York. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

Side Man—Warren Leight's nostalgic paean to mid-century jazz musicians has moved to a new theatre, with Christian Slater in the cast. Michael Mayer is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Spalding Gray—The monologuist returns to P.S. 122 with his work in progress, "Morning, Noon & Night." Continues, Mondays only, through Dec. 21. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Swan Lake—The British choreographer Matthew Bourne's thrilling, iconoclastic version of the Tchaikovsky ballet takes the story of the troubled Prince who falls in love with a swan out of the realm of the folkloric and into the realm of Freudian nightmare, where obsession substitutes for enchantment. The simple but profound exchange of male for female swans sweeps away in one stroke the hidebound frou-frou of the traditional version and releases enormous energy into the music. (10/19/98) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

Symphonie Fantastique—Abstract puppets underwater, set to the music of Berlioz. A peerless, delightful evening. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

This Is Our Youth—A dark comedy by Kenneth Lonergan. Mark Brokaw is the director. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Wit—Margaret Edson's funny, diamond-sharp first play manages to yoke together Donne's "Holy Sonnets" and ovarian cancer to make an original drama about the dignity of the spirit and the failure of modern medicine. Kathleen Chalfant, as the feisty English professor with only two hours to live and so many acid jokes to tell, gives one helluva fine performance. (MCC Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765.)

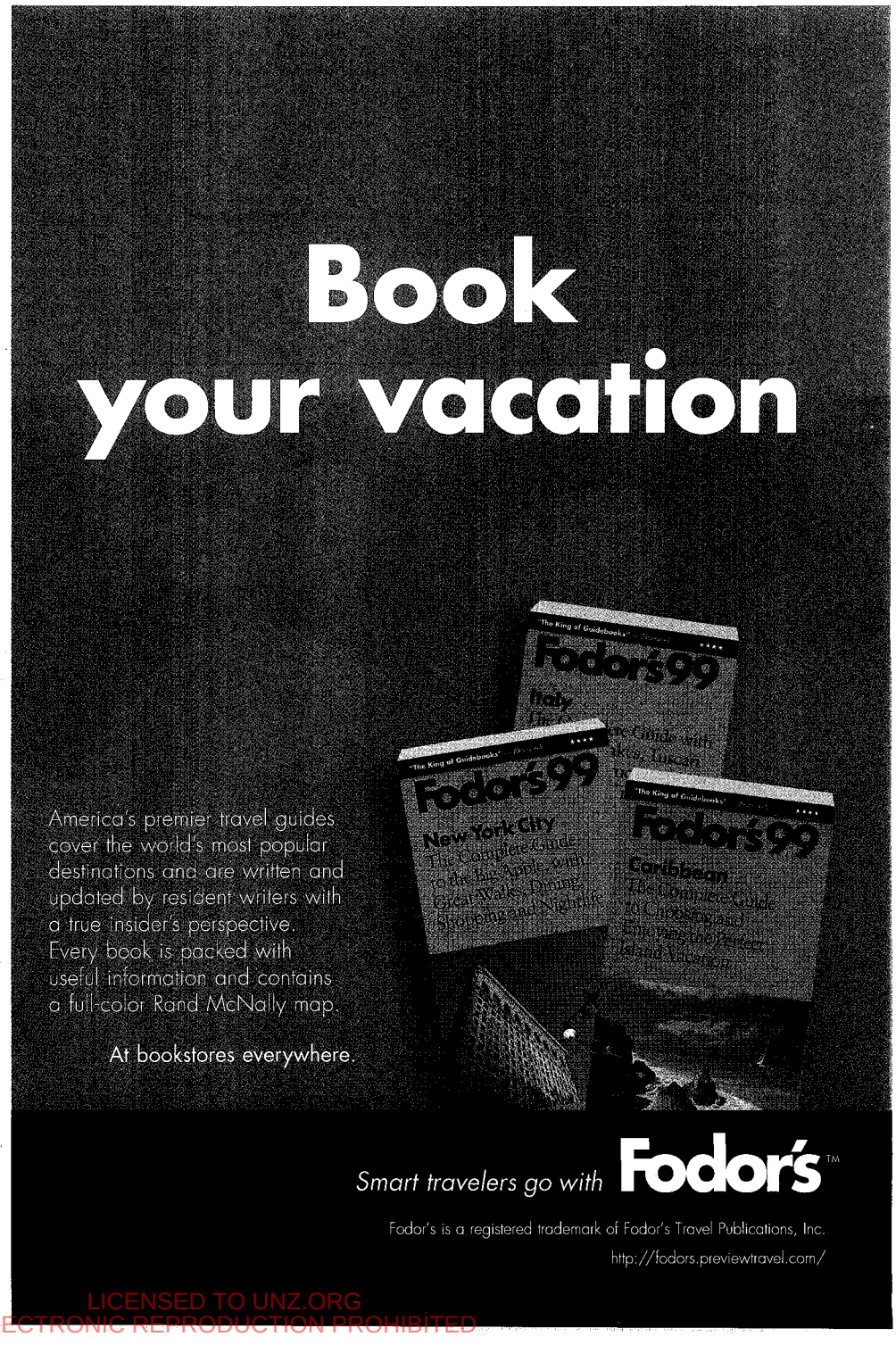
Wolf Lullaby—A nine-year-old is accused of murdering another child, in a drama by Australian playwright Hilary Bell. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200. Closes Nov. 22.)

The Women of Orleans—Kristin Marting's play, set in post-Civil War New Orleans, focusses on the lives and love affairs of four women from different backgrounds. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

Zora Neale Hurston—A drama about the black American novelist, folklorist, and playwright. Written by Laurence Holder. Elizabeth Van Dyke has the title role. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

Art: Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Beauty and the Beast:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **The Beauty Queen of Leenane:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **Blue Man Group/Tubes:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **Bring in da Noise, Bring in da Funk:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **Cabaret:** Kit Kat Klub, 124 W. 43rd St. 719-1300. (The show moves to Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St., on Nov. 12.) . . . **Cats:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **Chicago:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **Dinah Was:** Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100. . . . **The Fantasticks:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **Forbidden Broadway:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **Hedwig and the Angry Inch:** Jane Street Theatre, Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. 239-6200. . . . **I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **Jekyll & Hyde:** Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Late-Nite Catechism:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **The Lion King:** New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . **Les Misérables:** Im-



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perial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . MISS SAIGON: Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . PERFECT CRIME: Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . POWER PLAYS: Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. . . . RAGTIME: Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . R & J: John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 354-2220. . . . RENT: Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL: Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . SECRETS EVERY SMART TRAVELER SHOULD KNOW: Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599. . . . SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ: Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . THE SOUND OF MUSIC: Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . STOMP: Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . TITANIC: Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING: St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . VISITING MR. GREEN: Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-0700.

DANCE

Garth Fagan Dance—The "Lion King" choreographer brings his own Rochester-based company to New York, with repertory offerings and the première of "Two Pieces of One: Green." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 10-14 and Nov. 17 at 8 and Nov. 15 at 2 and 7:30. Through Nov. 22.)

Dance Theatre Workshop—Sharon Hayes and Erica Stuart bring separate solo performances to a shared two-week engagement at D.T.W. In "The Lesbian," Hayes presents her findings from a yearlong cross-country trip observing "lesbians in their natural habitat." She embodies some of the characters she met along the way and also speaks as an anthropologist/museum guide, taking the audience on a tour of an imaginary Hall of the Lesbian. (Nov. 12-13 at 8. Through Nov. 22.) In "A Girl Joan," Stuart, a student of Korean traditions of solo vocal performance, portrays both Joan of Arc and the many voices in her head. "Joan has a lot of different voices—even when she's just being herself," Stuart says. "The way she talks to her mother is different from the way she talks to the men she's asking to give her a horse." (Nov. 14 at 8 and Nov. 15 at 3. Through Nov. 20.) (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077.)

"De Flor"—The choreographer Margarita Guergué collaborates with composer Hahn Rowe, singer Mimi Goese, photographer Maria Anguera de Sojo, and a cast of fifteen dancers, led by Vicky Shick and Cydney Wilkes. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Nov. 12-15 at 8:30.)

Maher Benham's Coyote Dancers—The thirty-five-member company, augmented by the Asanadancers of the Jivamukti Yoga Center, perform nine works by the Martha Graham School teacher Maher Benham, including "Voices from Out There" and "Coyote Moon, Craters of Love." (Kaye Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Nov. 13-15 at 8.)

"The Not Fade Away Project"—The choreographers Artis Smith and Germaine Salsberg and their seven-member troupe of over-thirty dancers present new works and such repertory pieces as "Small Craft Warning" and "A Place at the Table." (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 362-9382. Nov. 13 at 9 and Nov. 14-15 at 8.)

"Charges from Domremy"—The choreographer Kathleen Dyer sets her full-length work about Joan of Arc, performed by the twelve-member KDNY company, to composer Richard Einhorn's "Voices of Light" oratorio. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Nov. 12-15 at 8:30.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

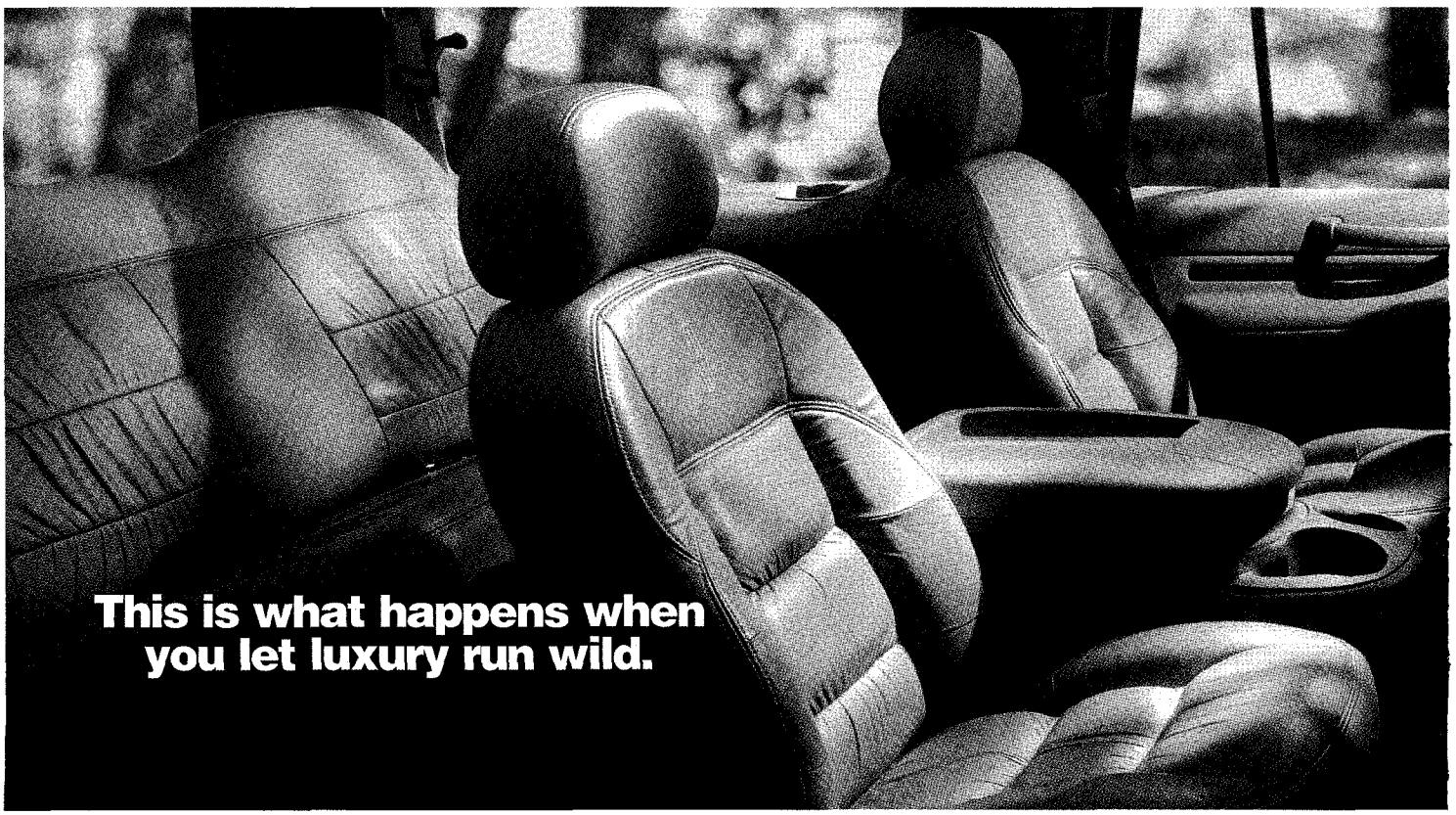
Dewey Redman—An integral member of Ornette Coleman's and Keith Jarrett's bands before striking out on his own, tenor saxophonist Redman was fusing earth-toned blues, free-jazz excursions, and reverential bop and ballads long before his celebrated son Joshua even knew which end of the sax you blew into. (New School, 55 W. 13th St. 229-5488. Nov. 12 at 6:30.)

Joe Satriani—An evening with Long Island's own fleet-fingered guitar hero. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Nov. 12 at 8.)

Carnegie Hall Jazz Band—Duke Ellington and Count Basie deserve every bit of the glory they regularly receive from contemporary repertory big bands, but it's also refreshing to get a peek at the still-sturdy work of the little brothers of the swing pantheon. The members of the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band had better be in tip-top shape if they want to evoke the sleek perfection of the legendary Jimmie Lunceford Band, while their nod to "the sentimental gentleman of jazz," Tommy Dorsey, is an important step in acknowledging the overlooked virtues of the more commercial Swing Era orchestras. Guests include saxophonist Branford Marsalis and the esteemed arranger Gerald Wilson. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 12 at 8.)

John Lurie and the Lounge Lizards—The wacky one leads his band in a program of film soundtracks. (See the Knitting Factory under "Rock, Etc.") (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510. Nov. 12 at 8.)

Jazz at Lincoln Center—Blood may well be spilled at this evening's program, "Blues Up and Down—A Battle in the Bucket." It's a meeting of virile elders, including West Coast tenor-sax legend Teddy Edwards and trombonist Al Grey, and such younger chomping-



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at-the-bit players as trumpeter Nicholas Payton and pianist Cyrus Chestnut. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Nov. 12 and Nov. 14 at 8.)

Goo Goo Dolls—Moments before this below-average trio was about to find a place in the cutout bins of history, it was rescued by Meg Ryan and Nicolas Cage. Thanks to the unexpected success of the "City of Angels" soundtrack, the Goo Goos are suddenly huge. On "Slide," the band's latest offering, you'll find another pile of jangly R.E.M. hand-me-downs. With the modern rock of Buffalo Tom. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Nov. 13 at 8.)

New York Autumn Blues Festival—Harmonica player Carey Bell, a veteran of Muddy Waters's band, and Magic Slim and the Teardrops open the second annual celebration of the blues on Nov. 13-14 at 8. . . . ¶ The festival continues on Nov. 15 at 8 with an evening of blues piano, featuring New Orleans native Henry Butler, eighty-five-year-old Pinetop Perkins, and former Howlin' Wolf sideman Detroit Junior. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

The Big Apple Bluegrass Festival—Legendary fiddler Vassar Clements, local heroes the Bob Grant band, Celtic banjo innovator Tom Hanway, banjo great Tony Trischka, and a host of others gather for two days of blistering playing. (The Baggot Inn, 82 W. 3rd St. 477-0622. Nov. 14-15 starting at 1.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Nov. 12-14: Four of Freddie Hubbard's stylistic offspring turn out to honor the brassiest of the original hard-bop trumpeters. **Tom Harrell** and **Eddie Henderson** are first-generation Hubbard-ites, while **Nicholas Payton** and **Terrell Stafford** represent the younger pups who are still gleaning tips from Hub's recordings. Dining.

Digital Underground, at Wetlands.

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Nov. 15: The **Mose Allison** trio. Behind Allison's laid-back Mississippi charm lies the mind of a killer. Lyrically dismembering hypocrites is a full-time job, but Allison somehow finds time to slip in some wonderfully eccentric piano playing alongside his honey-oozing blues drawl. Lately, Van Morrison has taken a shine to Allison's tunes, but no one can deliver offhand irony like jazz's Southern Gentleman. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul**. Dining.

Jazz Standard, 116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—The **Andrew Hill** sextet is in through Nov. 15. Hill's music is dark, elusive, unsettling, and beautiful. The now-you-see-him-now-you-don't pianist and composer has played the role of the outsider for so long that any exposure to the spotlight must have dizzying effects on him. Hill's artistic peak was in the nineteen-sixties, the only decade that could spawn and tolerate the inherent mysteries of his oblique harmonic stance, the derailed accents of his playing, his seesaw mid-tempo melodies, and his trademark dirgelike ballads. It was private music that never really fit. If Hill has mellowed over the years, ironing out his rhythms and taming his attitude, there's still enough of the dogged individualist in him to remind you of the good, and cryptic, old days. The big news is his band: a gathering of longtime Hill fanatics who happen to be killer players, including saxophonist **Marty Ehrlich** and trumpeter **Ron Horton**.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Nov. 11-14: **Roland Hanna and Paul West.** One of the giants of Detroit's fertile pianistic delta, Sir Roland is an Ellington scholar, a knight of the Liberian government, and a crackerjack blues player. An open-armed stylist who can be as fastidious as he is funky, Hanna remains delightfully beyond categorization.

Lenox Lounge, 288 Lenox Ave., between 124th and 125th Sts. (427-0253)—Nov. 13-14: The **Dizzy Reece** quartet. Now there's a name from the past. With some highly regarded albums on Blue Note way back when and dotted appearances on obscure labels over the years, this highly proficient Jamaican-born hard-bop trumpeter qualifies as the very defini-

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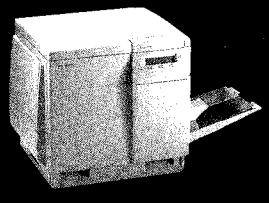

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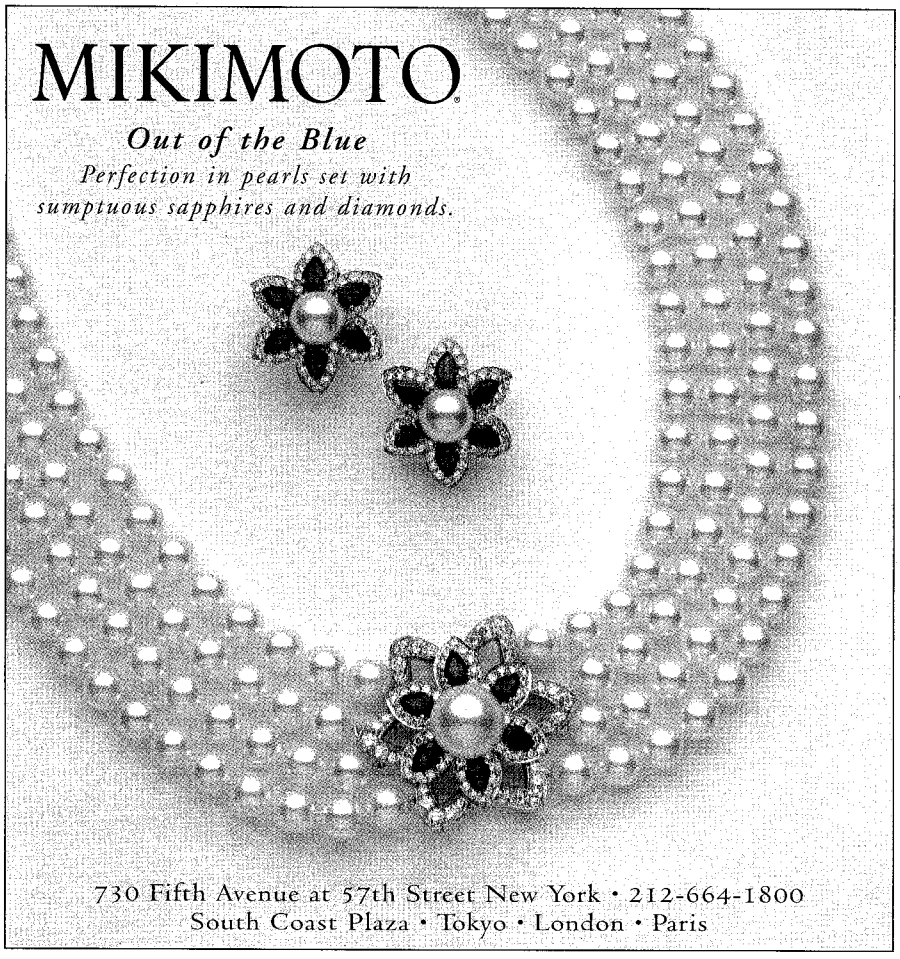

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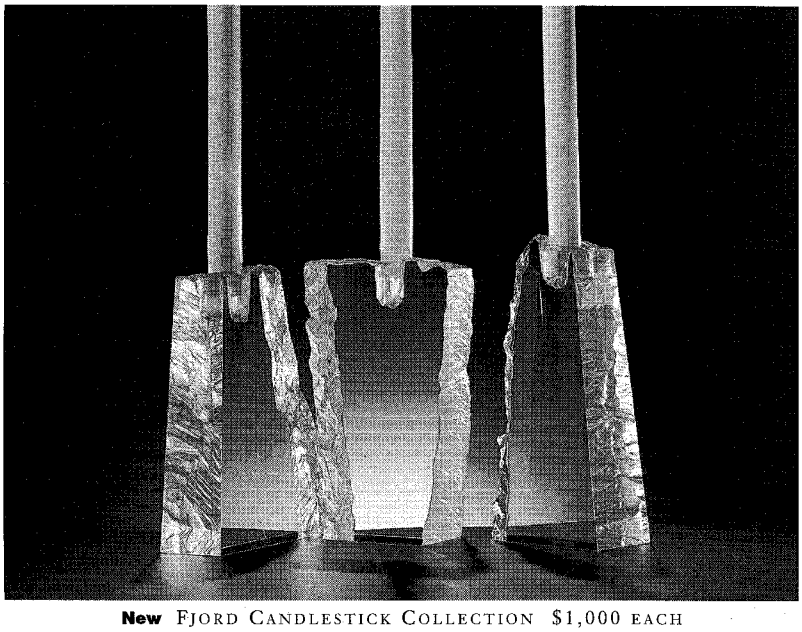

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tion of a minor legend. If Reece has still got the goods, this uptown engagement could well be like stepping into a time capsule and finding yourself in 1962.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—This jewel box high in the sky will shut down for good in mid-December, but glittering offerings are still to be found in the home stretch. **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY,** in the middle of a two-week stint, is one of the easiest-to-enjoy singers in the jazz-pop business.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The daring and imaginative **LEON PARKER** (here through Nov. 15) may be the most interesting jazz drummer to surface in years, but jazz is often the last thing on his mind. On his own recordings ("Awakening" is the latest), Parker investigates the music and percussion instruments of various ethnic groups with as much zeal as he has shown for outright swing in his work with others, notably pianist Jacky Terrasson. Which path Parker will take and what company he's keeping are tantalizing questions that make this engagement well worth checking out. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

ROCK, ETC.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Nov. 12: Former junkie turned basketball diarist **JIM CARROLL** performs with his band.

BOWERY BALLROOM, 6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—Nov. 11: Thanks to last year's innocuous, radio-friendly hit "Barely Breathing," **DUNCAN SHEIK** hit it big his first time out of the blocks. Now, the latter-day Bryan Ferry returns with "Humming," which, like Sheik's début album, puts one in mind of Roxy Music, only with a tad less ingenuity and a great deal more sincerity. With the groovy trip-hop of **HOOVERPHONIC.** Nov. 13: **JAD FAIR** and **YO LA TENGO.** Fair, half of the seventies avant-garde rock band Half Japanese, takes the stage backed by Hoboken's finest.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Nov. 13: The **BROOKLYN FUNK ESSENTIALS.** Formed five years ago, this ensemble received buckets of critical acclaim for its début album, "Cool and Steady and Easy." The buzz led to a couple of ups (tours and a deal with RCA) and downs (tour buses and a breakup with RCA). Along the way the Essentials found themselves headlining a world-music festival in Istanbul. They were so taken with Turkey and its music that they returned to record an album there. Expect more than a few cuts from the new work, "In the Buzz Bag," when they take the stage. Nov. 14: **LITTLE FEAT.** Since the death of Lowell George, this band has been a shadow of its former glorious self, but the remaining members still know how to make chicken-fried boogie.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—This week the downtown home of the avant-garde is home to the **DIVX SOUNDTRACK FESTIVAL.** Nov. 11: Composer **CARTER BURWELL** ("Fargo"), post-modern guitarist **DAVID TORN,** and fretman **GEOFFREY GORDON** perform a program of Burwell's work. Nov. 12: Pianist and composer **RYUICHI SAKAMOTO** ("The Last Emperor") gives a recital. Nov. 13: **STEVEN BERNSTEIN'S SEX MOB** and keyboardist **JOHN MEDESKI** play John Barry's music from James Bond films.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—Nov. 12: **THE HOLMES BROTHERS.** They have been in the business for more than twenty-five years, and their time has been well spent. They have it all—blues, soul, gospel, R. & B., and country, along with a poise that lends the mix an authority that younger, looser groups can't touch.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—Nov. 13: The country, folk, and rock sounds of the **HEALTH & HAPPINESS SHOW,** with **ROGUES MARCH** and **THREE WHEELER.** Nov. 15: Former Velvet Underground drummer **MO TUCKER** entertains the troops.

S.O.B.'S, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Nov. 12: The great funk keyboardist **BERNIE WORRELL,** a charter member of Parliament-Funkadelic and, later, a member

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of the enlarged Talking Heads, leads his own hip-swaying ensemble. Dining.

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Starting Nov. 14, with the **Blue Saracens** and **Bim Bam Baby**, Saturday nights feature live swing bands.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Nov. 15: **Digital Underground**. A rare appearance by the Oakland rap collective famous for giving Tupac Shakur his start and for their 1989 hit, "The Humpty Dance." Prosthetic-nosed leader Humpty Hump's singsong patter lends a Fractured Fairy Tale feeling to the group's mixture of blaxploitation-style pimp braggadocio and blissed-out New Age sex philosophy. In other wistful moments, he shows a melancholy nostalgia for lost love and bygone bullshit sessions with dead pals. Touring to support their new album, "Who Got the Gravy?," these clowns are the silliest and funkiest carriers of the seventies P-Funk torch.

TABLES FOR TWO

Le Perigord, 405 E. 52nd St. (755-6244)—If you're even the slightest—the *slightest*—bit bohemian, this thirty-five-year-old bastion of classic French cuisine is probably not at the top of your list for a night out. Its low ceilings, booths tight as roller-coaster cars, and peached-out, hotel-restaurant walls are going to oppress you. It's uptown. And you'll have nothing in common with the crowd of high-decibel businessmen eating through their expense accounts on weeknights, and well-heeled families conducting their nearly silent business on weekends. (On one recent night a man roared, "I swear it's true about Hillary—my guy at the Pentagon told me!" On another, a woman asked her mortified daughter's date, "So, tell me—no one ever actually got rich being a linguist, did they?")

The staff, however, will make you feel like a regular. One befuddled but expert waiter brightens in particular at the chance to move beyond the restaurant's usual demographics. "But, sir," he whispers, "you must eat the veal kidneys if you want to have healthy kidneys yourself." His assistance with the wine list is so reassuring that even when his response to your selection verges on horror ("Châteauneuf-du-Pape? Non, non, non!") you feel as though you've just nailed a good joke.

Even if you don't follow the waiter's prescription when ordering, you'll still want to indulge in a few internal organs. The duck foie gras and sweetbreads are great, but the aforementioned sautéed veal kidneys in Armagnac and mustard are so good they'll make you lie awake at night wondering what you've done to yourself: too rich, too dense, too powerful—the culinary equivalent of plutonium. Of course, lightweights can simply go for the mignonette of beef with red-wine and bone-marrow sauce or the earthy duck confit. In any case, don't forget dessert (you paid for it—it's prix fixe). One excessively rich way to round out the evening is to have the Grand Marnier mousse—no flashy architecture, just a delicious beige puddle on a plate. If you forgo expectations of opulence and formality just because you're spending a lot of money on dinner, you'll warm to Le Perigord and it will warm to you. (Open weekdays for lunch and dinner, weekends for dinner only. Prix fixe, $52.)

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

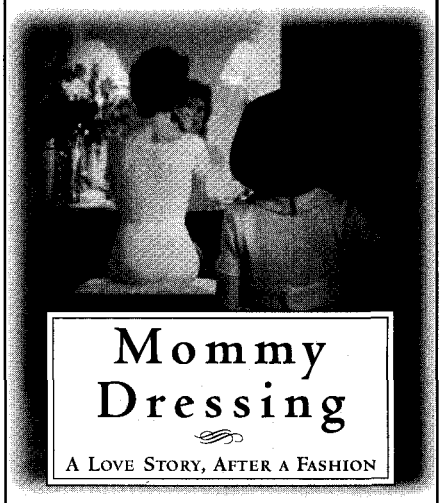
Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Edgar Degas, Photographer." The influence of photography on Impressionist painting has long been established; here Degas seems to be returning the favor, exploiting avant-gardist, painterly effects in the mechanical medium. The most compelling pictures document the intimate Degas circle—Renoir, Mallarmé, et al. Indeed, a symbolist aesthetic seems to pervade many of the best photographs, as shadowy figures emerge from the half-darkness, or distorted reflections are caught in mirrors. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "Donato Creti: Melancholy and Perfection," seventeen paintings by the Bolognese classicist. Through Jan. 31. . . . ¶ "Charles Burchfield from the Collection." Through Feb. 21. . . . ¶ "Félix Vallotton: Woodcuts and Three Paintings." Through Feb. 21. . . . ¶ "Mary Cassatt: Drawings and Prints in the Met." Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ "From Van Eyck to Bruegel: Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum." Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "Jade in Ancient Costa Rica." Through Feb. 28. . . . ¶ "Sacred Visions: Early Paintings from Central Tibet." Through Jan. 17. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Jackson Pollock," a comprehensive retrospective—the first in the United States since 1967—of the artist many regard as the most influential American painter of this century. It would be hard to fault the installation or the choice of works: in addition to many smaller drawings and canvases, the Modern has secured all of the major large pictures, from the mural that Peggy Guggenheim commissioned for her foyer in 1943 to the late "Blue Poles" (1952). This show should lay to rest one misconception: that Pollock's volatile life and violent end in a car crash on Long Island exert a more powerful pull than the works themselves. While these events certainly contribute to the artist's mythos, the pictures speak unequivocally of a revolution in form whose influence can still be felt half a century later. Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ For his stint in MOMA's Project series, the conceptual artist Maurizio Cattelan has hired an actor to walk around the museum during the afternoon, through Dec. 4, in a giant Picasso head and suit (depicting the artist in his lovable bald, sandaled, French-sailor-sweater stage) greeting museumgoers. Press materials have suggested influences from Fellini to commedia dell'arte, but visitors will be more struck by the actor's resemblance to Mickey Mouse. . . . ¶ "Focus: Pollock and Printmaking." Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ "Dubuffet to de Kooning: Expressionist Prints from Europe and America." Through Feb. 2. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"Rendezvous: Masterpieces from the Centre Georges Pompidou and the Guggenheim Museums." By combining works from its permanent collection with works from the Pompidou Center in Paris (closed for renovations until Dec. 31, 1999), the Guggenheim has suddenly become an uptown sister to MOMA. Wright's first few ramps now tell the familiar story of modernism, from the Fauves to the Surrealists, but with a fresh sequence of images, many of them dazzling. Higher up, the synergy between the two collections turns to rivalry, as American painting, nonexistent down below, outshines a ragtag collection of Europeans. In the exhibition's final room, Arte Povera and Process Art meet in a slightly forced spirit of rapprochement. Through Jan. 24. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—"Premises," a spectacular disaster in which two mediocre exhibitions (one of postwar French architecture,

"A delicious memoir"*



"LOIS GOULD dresses and undresses her fashion designer mother—and herself—with **astuteness, humor, and heartbreaking details.**"
—Phillip Lopate, author of *Portrait of My Body**

◆

"**Extraordinary**...Gould fuses this intimate material with social, national, or political history. The result is to free, not burden, the narrator's voice. The future of the memoir depends on this new kind of 'I'."
—Margo Jefferson, *The New York Times Book Review*

◆

"Gould is **a brilliant comedian of manners and a stunning social historian, trekking fashionable New York in the postwar period.** *Mommy Dressing* is heartrending in its unsentimental clarity."
—Laurie Stone, author of *Laughing in the Dark*

◆

"In this era of smarmy memoirs that offer more by way of indictment than insight, **Lois Gould's *Mommy Dressing* stands apart.**"
—*The Wall Street Journal*

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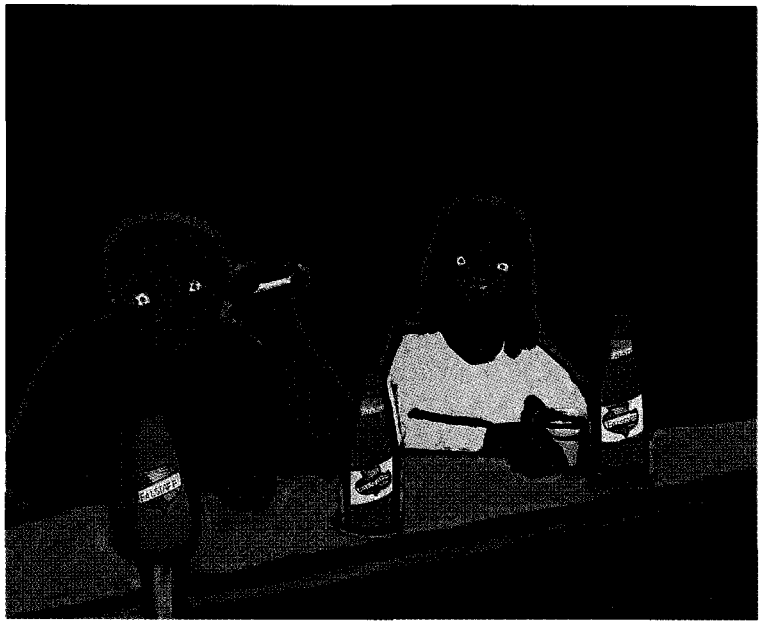

"BUY YOUR OWN DAMN BEER": *The artist Linda St. John looks at a volatile world of poverty, alcoholism, and blighted love. But she evokes her scenes of Rust Belt family life with deceptively childish means: she uses Cray-Pas crayons and seam rippers to outline Teddy-bearish figures on a bender. "Three Ralphs on a Couch," her suite of drawings devoted to three generations of St. John men (at Bodell, 13 East 7th Street, through November 29), displays this powerful mixture of satire and intimacy, as well as plenty of cardboard-cutout Falstaff beer bottles.*

the other of postwar French installation and performance art) collide, to the benefit of neither. The shower-curtain scrims that function as partitions turn out to be too transparent to hold slide projections; the wall texts are unreadable academic hocus-pocus; and the intermittent light and noise from the installations make it difficult to focus on models and prototypes. Carefully installed, the architecture show might have been illuminating, since French commissions tend to be more adventurous than American ones. What's on view here, however, feels more like an indictment than a celebration of French culture. Through Jan. 10. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The horizontal aspect of Mark Rothko's luminous, slightly spooky paintings of rectangles piled one above the other suggests affinities with nineteenth-century Romantic landscapes; on the other hand, the broad expanses of color and the severe geometric reduction look forward to the color-field and Minimalist art of the sixties. The temptation at this retrospective is simply to take a bath in Rothko's luxuriant palette—to see him as an AbEx Bonnard. One should keep in mind, however, that the artist allied his art with the timeless and the tragic. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ The first full-scale retrospective of the work of Bob Thompson. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou" presents an astonishing array of objects—dolls, flags, rattles, pots, calabashes, medicine packets, paintings—more than five hundred in all, which bring to life the vivid history and practice of the Afro-Caribbean religion. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch" offers some hundred large-scale court and religious paintings, manuscripts, and enamels done in the representational style that flourished under the dynasty that ruled Iran from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. Through Jan. 24. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—"Common Man, Mythic Vision: The Paintings of Ben Shahn" marks the centennial of the Lithuanian-born artist with his first major show in more than two decades. Through March 7. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City. (718-784-2084)—"Cities on the Move." First produced in Vienna in 1997, this multimedia exhibition celebrates the explosive growth of Asia's urban centers, from Tokyo and Singapore to China's "Special Economic Zones," such as Zhuhai and Shenzhen, where, according to Rem Koolhaas, "architects can design a skyscraper in three days or four." The problem isn't only that the recession has clouded the show's premise; it's that the curators, in their breathless excitement at the region's growth, didn't bother to organize their material. The result is a sort of "Special Exhibition Zone." Dozens of slide projectors blink on and off, and video monitors and display tables beckon, but viewers are likely to feel more numbed than educated. Through Jan. 17. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Arshile Gorky (1904-48)—Thickly painted biomorphic abstractions, mostly from the late thirties and early forties, when Gorky had not quite emerged from his infatuation with Picasso. Unlike most pastiches, however, Gorky's are marvellously assured and inventive—Picasso would have been happy to sign them. Through Jan. 9. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313.)

Al Held—"The Last Series," a suite of twenty small, abstract paintings from the mid-sixties based on overlapping letter forms. One suspects that each bright, clunky image represents a stacked word, but number twelve, the only legible one, admonishes us with a firm "NO." The radiant, hard-edged color in several of these paintings unexpectedly foreshadows later work by other artists, including Howard Hodgkin and Peter Halley. Through Nov. 14. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454.)

Henry Moore (1898-1986)—For the hundredth anniversary of the sculptor's birth, a mini-retrospective that takes the form of a veritable harem. Dozens of Moore's glistening, caressable women lounge on high pedestals, in poses that suggest wholesome indolence. With their dromedary humps, knobs, and tidal-pool hollows, each embodies a distinct answer to Moore's overriding question: What are women like? Through Nov. 17. (James Goodman, 41 E. 57th St. 593-3737.)

Short List—Fernando Botero, Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900. Through Dec. 5. . . . **Willem de Kooning,** Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 1018 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 744-7400. Through Dec. 19. . . . **John Ferren,** Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. 644-7171. Through Dec. 3. . . . **Anton Heyboer,** Baron/Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. 581-9191. Through Dec. 19. . . . **Ellsworth Kelly,** Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Roy Lichtenstein,** Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. 489-3331. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Ann Lofquist,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. 664-0907. Through Dec. 2. . . . **Henri Matisse,** C & M, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020. Through Dec. 12. . . . **Sigmar Polke,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. 988-1623. Through Jan. 16. . . . **Jackson Pollock,** Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. 397-6780. Through Dec. 19. . . . **Stone Roberts,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Ed Ruscha,** Gray, 1018 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 472-8787. Through Dec. 5. . . . **Paul Russotto,** Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St. 288-5888. Through Nov. 14. . . . **Joel Shapiro,** Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292. Through Nov. 14. . . . **Julius Stewart,** Jordan, 958 Madison Ave., at 75th St. 570-9500. Through Dec. 5. . . . **Bob Thompson,** Rosenfeld 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082. Through Jan. 9. . . . **Idelle Weber,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122. Through Nov. 28.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Carl Andre—New sculptures, in copper, lead, poplar, and sandstone, by this minimalist. All are floor-based and explore variations on the modular unit. "Perihelion" (1998) constructs concentric circles out of identical poplar planks. Trios of Andre's famous flat squares touch at the corners, forming triangular voids. The exhibition also includes "Hand Trials" (1972), a suite of the artist's poetry on such historical subjects as King Philip's War and the conquest of Mexico. Insofar as they combine his interests in systems and modularity with an immersion in concrete poetry, Gertrude Stein, and Ezra Pound, these small, unique works should be especially rewarding to Andre's fans. Through Nov. 28. (Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105.)

Max Estenger—"Watching Forever," sculptures and digitalized photographs dwelling on the hazy territory between religious fervor and scientific exploration. Stephen Hawking and the Heaven's Gate cultists are favored subjects. Materials tend toward the anti-aesthetic: steel, plastic, and plywood. It's all very "X-Files," in a good way. Through Nov. 14. (Martz, 529 W. 20th St. 206-3686.)

Ernesto Neto—"Navedenga and the Ovaloids," an installation of sculptures by this Brazilian artist. A number of the "ovaloids" have an unmistakable organic vibe: they resemble beanbag sculptures but are perforated by orifices that could suggest eyes, mouths, genitalia, or lesions. As in previous shows, Neto exploits the contrasts between such natural and synthetic materials as stretched Lycra, sand, ground red pepper, and Styrofoam. Through Nov. 25. (Bonakdar Jancou, 521 W. 21st St. 414-4144.)

Jennifer Reeves—Jokey, good-natured paintings by a young artist whose début generated a good deal of art-world buzz last year. Using

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paint as thick and bright as Play-Doh, Reeves conjures up infantile landscapes. There are rain clouds of succulent blue glop, scribbled trees, and ribbony fields of polychromatic lasagna. Ironic and dopey at once, her images update Dubuffet for the era of Toys "R" Us. Through Nov. 14. (Stux, 529 W. 20th St. 352-1600.)

SHORT LIST—NAYLAND BLAKE, Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Through Nov. 28. . . . WILLEM DE KOONING, Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200. Through Dec. 19. (See listing in Galleries—Downtown.) . . . EUGENIO DITTBORN, Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave., at 18th St. 367-7474. Through Dec. 5. . . . LOUISE FISHMAN, Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727. Through Nov. 14. . . . LUCY GUNNING, Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Through Nov. 28. . . . KEVIN HANLEY, I-20 Gallery, 529 W. 20th St. 645-1100. Through Nov. 28. . . . TONY OURSLER, Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100. Through Nov. 28. . . . MONIQUE PRIETO, Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. 727-7366. Through Dec. 23. . . . SCOTT RICHTER, Harris, 529 W. 20th St. 463-9666. Through Nov. 14. . . . JAMES ROSENQUIST, Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500. Through Nov. 28. . . . GEORGE STOLL, Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through Nov. 28. . . . MARNIE WEBER, Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555. Through Nov. 21. . . . SUE WILLIAMS, 303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121. Through Nov. 21.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

WILLEM DE KOONING (1904-97)—Four groups of drawings from various stages of the artist's career, including a delightful suite from 1958 that transforms a laundered shirt into a whipsawing calligraphic abstraction. There are also doodlelike drawings that the artist did with his eyes closed, and, unexpectedly, forty small crucified figures. One's suspicion that the religious theme didn't really stir de Kooning is confirmed when one of these figures kicks up her leg and begins doing the Charleston. Through Dec. 19. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166.)

KARA WALKER—Lewdly charming "race pictures" from a twenty-eight-year-old artist, whose folkloric images of the antebellum South have made her one of the art stars of the nineties. Here, Walker broadens her range of materials, with paintings (in gouache and coffee), found objects, and a wall text. The strongest works, however, remain her nineteenth-century-style silhouettes, which have a mischievous graphic elegance: imagine a cross between Aubrey Beardsley and Richard Pryor. Through Nov. 28. (Wooster Gardens, 558 Broadway. 941-6210.)

SHORT LIST—FRANCIS BACON, Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. 274-9300. Through Jan. 16. . . . DAVID BLACK, DFN, 560 Broadway. 334-3400. Through Dec. 5. . . . ROSS BLECKNER, Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. 965-0753. Through Dec. 19. . . . FORD CRULL, M-13, at 72 Greene St. 925-3007. Through Dec. 5. . . . KIM DINGLE, Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. 431-3685. Through Dec. 19. . . . LEON GOLUB, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232. Through Nov. 14. . . . OLIVER MARSDEN, Brownstone, 39 Wooster St. 334-3455. Through Dec. 12. . . . RICHARD PHILLIPS, Petzel, 26 Wooster St. 334-9466. Through Nov. 28. . . . MATTHEW RITCHIE, Basilico, 26 Wooster St. 966-1831. Through Nov. 28. . . . LINDA ST. JOHN, Bodell, 13 E. 7th St. 477-1820. Open Sundays; through Nov. 29. . . . JOEL SHAPIRO, Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. 431-9224. Through Nov. 14. (See listing in Galleries—Uptown.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

CHRISTIE'S—Nov. 11: Paintings and sculptures from nineteenth-century academic traditions. . . . ¶ Nov. 12-13: Contemporary art, which Christie's defines as works created since 1970. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.) . . . At CHRISTIE'S EAST: Nov. 11: Sales of moderately priced books and jewelry. . . . ¶ Nov. 17: European decorative art. (219 E. 67th St. 606-0400.)

SOTHEBY'S—Nov. 16-17: Auctions of Impressionist, modern, and contemporary art, including (on Nov. 16) thirty-nine works from

BOOK CURRENTS

Chartings

EVER since Marco Polo's journey to Cathay, maps have been hot property, promising everyone from destiny-seeking explorers to Winnebago warriors that you can, indeed, get there from here. These days, maps are something of a rage in scholarly circles, and several recent volumes on cartography show that there's more to maps than Mercator and Michelin.

MARK ROZZO

NEW FOUND LANDS (Routledge), Peter Whitfield's meditation on the dual histories of cartography and exploration, is chockablock with colorful maps by such notable Europeans as Cantino, whose 1502 depiction of Africa is startlingly accurate, as well as with contributions from Islamic, Indian, and Chinese mapmakers. The existence of so many cartographic traditions around the globe suggests to Whitfield that when we think of Columbus and Drake "the term Encounter is a more accurate one than Discovery." Mark Warhus would certainly agree. In ANOTHER AMERICA: NATIVE AMERICAN MAPS AND THE HISTORY OF OUR LAND (Griffin), Warhus shows how Native American mappers, including the Blackfoot Ac ko mok ki, whose map of the Rocky Mountains turned out to be indispensable to Lewis and Clark, helped open the continent to European settlers. Unlike their Old World counterparts, these maps—drawn on bison hides, birch bark, and, occasionally, scratched in stone or snow—were ephemeral documents meant to supplement a more permanent oral history.

In MAPS AND POLITICS (University of Chicago), Jeremy Black questions the objectivity of maps, preferring to see the "mapmaker as creator rather than reflector." Yet, in recounting his boyhood obsession with maps, Black suggests that one hard truth remains: maps are simply great to look at. Sumptuous proof of this comes in Melville C. Branch's AN ATLAS OF RARE CITY MAPS (Princeton Architectural Press), which offers city plans, commissioned by England's Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, of forty nineteenth-century metropolises. In these hand-colored engravings, which the Society described as "of unexampled cheapness, yet finished in the best manner," historically battered cities like Warsaw and Calcutta have never looked better.

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Books.

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Novel Perspectives

[FROM SIMON & SCHUSTER]

COMPASS OF THE HEART

by Priscilla Cogan

From the bestselling author of *Winona's Web* and winner of the Small Press Book Award for fiction, comes a vivid tale of love, betrayal and sacrifice. Dr. Meggie O'Connor is a divorced psychologist who has just turned forty. Hawk is the Native American man who enters her life and changes it forever when they undertake a journey of the body and of the spirit. (Simon & Schuster)

Pub. Price: $23.00

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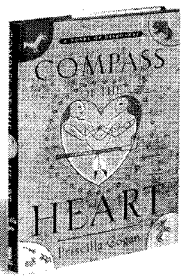
B&N Price: $16.10



A DO RIGHT MAN

by Omar Tyree

Bobby Dallas is a handsome, successful African-American searching for the one prize that has eluded him: a savvy, sexy woman with whom to share his life. But being "a do right man" is not so easy when it comes to romance and relationships. Funny, heartfelt and engaging, *A Do Right Man* demonstrates why Omar Tyree has become one of the most respected voices in contemporary African-American literature. (Scribner Paperback Fiction)

Pub. Price: $12.00

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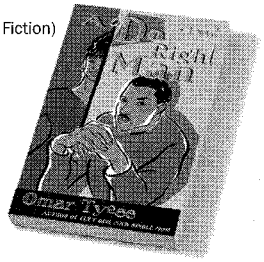
B&N Price: $9.60



THEY CALL ME MAD DOG!

by Erika Lopez

Tomato Rodriguez, Latina love goddess and free-spirited biker chick, has just been nabbed as a ruthless murderer. But her jailers are in for a surprise: She's really just a bisexual babe with a broken heart. With plenty of behind-the-bars action, this hilarious new novel is caged heat at its best—a true thrill-seeker's delight. (Simon & Schuster)

Pub. Price: $20.00

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B&N Price: $14.00

CREEK WALK AND OTHER STORIES

by Molly Giles

Pulitzer Prize nominee Molly Giles presents her second collection of short stories—14 exquisitely rendered narratives united by a common theme: the struggle of women to make their mark in a world of men. Revealing the most intimate details of her characters' lives, Giles achieves her impact not with literary tricks but through her craft, raising the ordinary to extraordinary levels. (Scribner Paperback Fiction)

Pub. Price: $9.00

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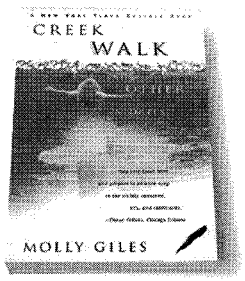
B&N Price: $7.20



SINGLE MOM

by Omar Tyree

Denise Stewart has raised her two sons alone while nurturing a successful career. But now, after ten years, she finds herself involved with both her sons' fathers as well as a new man. Suddenly, success takes on new meaning in her increasingly complex life. The result is a provocative look at three black men grappling with their changing roles—and the compelling, strikingly independent single mom at their center. (Simon & Schuster)

Pub. Price: $24.00

Discount **30%**

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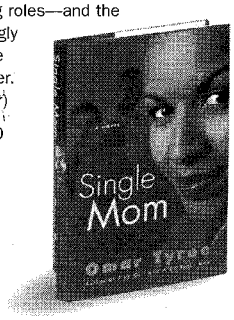


FLAMING IGUANAS

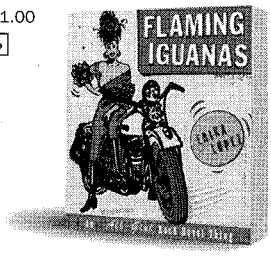
by Erika Lopez

It's a huge country out there, and somebody has to cross it. Enter the irrepressible, one-of-a-kind heroine Tomato Rodriguez, determined to make it to San Fransisco by motorcycle. In the rebellious, trendsetting tradition of Jack Kerouac, Hunter Thompson, and Thelma and Louise, this is one wildly inventive novel. (Scribner Paperback Fiction)

Pub. Price: $11.00

Discount **20%**

B&N Price: $8.80



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the *Reader's Digest* corporate art collection and (on Nov. 17) twenty paintings by Klee. . . . ¶ Nov. 17-18: Including works by Picasso, Pollock, and Johns. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Phillips—Impressionist, modern, and contemporary paintings, including works by Renoir and Léger. (406 E. 79th St. 570-4830. Nov. 16.)

Doyle—Twentieth-century paintings, sculptures, furniture, and decorative pieces. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730. Nov. 17.)

Swann—Prints and other works on paper. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Nov. 12.)

Modernism/Photography—The annual two-pronged show presented by Sanford Smith. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Nov. 12-15, with a benefit preview on Nov. 11. For information, call 472-1180.)

Triple Pier Expo—The second and final weekend of this mega-show, offering a vast range of antiques and collectibles. (Piers 88, 90, and 92, Twelfth Ave., from 48th St. to 52nd St. Nov. 14-15. For information, call 255-0020.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Julius Shulman—Wonderfully crisp modernist interiors and exteriors by this octogenarian chronicler of the Southern California architecture of Richard Neutra, Charles Eames, Raphael Soriano, Frank Lloyd Wright, and others. Through Nov. 14. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.)

International Center of Photography—"Walker Evans, Simple Secrets," a show of works from the collection of Marian and Benjamin A. Hill. . . . ¶ "Intimate City: The Photographs of Thomas Roma." Both shows through Nov. 29. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Short List—**Ansel Adams**, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Through Dec. 5. . . . **Jayne Hinds Bidaut**, Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819. Through Nov. 14. . . . **Brassaï**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through Nov. 14. . . . **Louis Brawley**, Deven Golden, 16 Mercer St. 334-3124. Through Nov. 14. . . . **Jim Dine**, Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Lee Friedlander**, Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through Dec. 31. . . . **Nan Goldin**, Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Kim Iacono**, Arsenal gallery, Fifth Ave. at 64th St. 360-8163. Open weekdays, 9 to 5; through Dec. 10. . . . **Bill Jacobson**, Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Abelardo Morell**, Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766. Through Dec. 5. . . . **Roger Newton**, Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through Nov. 14. . . . **Norman Parkinson** and **Dominique Nabokov**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223. Both shows through Dec. 5. . . . **Grace Robertson**, Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; through Dec. 5. . . . **John Schabel**, Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. 727-2752. Through Dec. 5. . . . **Hiroshi Sugimoto**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. 966-6160. Through Nov. 13. . . . **Wolfgang Tillmans**, Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. 627-6000. Through Nov. 28. . . . **Ben Vautier**, Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223. Through Dec. 5.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050, and for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Nov. 11 at 7:30 and Nov. 14 at 1:30: "Le Nozze di Figaro." . . . ¶ Nov. 12 and Nov. 16 at 8: "Tosca." . . . ¶ Nov. 13 and Nov. 17 at 8: "Aida." . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 8:30: "La Bohème." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—Nov. 12 at 7:30 and Nov. 14 at 8: "The Cunning Little Vixen," by Janáček. . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 8 and Nov. 15 at 1:30: "Of Mice and Men," by Carlisle Floyd. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 1:30: "Rigoletto." . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 7:30: "Madama Butterfly." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Lukas Foss, in a concert with commentary, at the Metropolitan Museum.

THOMAS LIBETTI

"Ravenshead"—A new one-man opera/performance piece with music by Steve Mackey, here featuring Rinde Eckert and the Paul Dresher Ensemble. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Nov. 12-13 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—In his first appearance as the orchestra's principal guest conductor, Colin Davis conducts Berlioz's "King Lear: Overture," Frank Martin's "Petite Symphonie Concertante," and a dozen of Mahler's "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" settings, with soprano Inger Dam-Jensen and baritone Thomas Quasthoff. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 12-14 at 8.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Leon Botstein conducts programmatic works from the first half of this century, by Mikolajus Čiurlionis, Scriabin, Schoenberg, Hindemith (his "Mathis der Maler Symphony"), and Gershwin (his Second Rhapsody, with pianist Alan Feinberg). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 11 at 8.)

Dresden Staatskapelle—Last month the Vienna Choir Boys passed through town on that ensemble's five-hundredth-anniversary tour. In their wake comes the Dresden orchestra—only slightly the choir's junior, since it turns four hundred and fifty this season. Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts a pair of concerts at Carnegie Hall. Nov. 13 at 8: An all-Wagner program comprising the Overtures to "Rienzi," "Der Fliegende Holländer," and "Tannhäuser," in addition to Act One of "Die Walküre"; with soprano Alessandra Marc, tenor Christian Franz, and bass Kurt Rydl. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 8: Strauss's "Also Sprach Zarathustra," the Symphonic Fantasy from "Die Frau Ohne Schatten," and the "Dance of the Seven Veils" and the final scene from "Salomé" (the latter featuring Ms. Marc).

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Once an essential adornment to New York's musical scene, this orchestra seemed headed toward extinction: in recent years, its programming became self-consciously academic, its musical standards declined markedly, its finances grew precarious, and its administration shrunk to a staff of two. A year ago, conductor Robert Spano took over the organization's musical direction, and last month an executive director was brought on board. Both face enormous challenges, but at least the ensemble begins its new season in a spirit of hope. In these concerts, Mr. Spano leads an imaginatively constructed program that explores how three of our era's notable composers have explored the possibilities of symphonic textures: Elliott Carter's "Allegro Scorrevole," a work that was premièred only last year; Luciano Berio's "Sinfonia," a surreal outpouring, with voices (here members of the New York Virtuoso Singers), of late-sixties sensibility; and John Adams's "Harmonielehre," which synthesizes minimalism and the lush vocabulary of the late nineteenth century. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. Nov. 13-14 at 8.)

Met Orchestra—James Levine leads Mozart's Bassoon Concerto (featuring Patricia Rogers, the orchestra's principal bassoonist since 1976), the première of Babbitt's Piano Concerto No. 2 (with Robert Taub), Ives's "The Unanswered Question" and "Central Park in the Dark," and Dvořák's Symphony No. 8. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 15 at 3.)

Cerddorion—The twenty-six-voice choir, directed by Susanne Peck, performs motets and choral songs by Brahms (including his "Vier Gesänge" for women's voices, harp, and French horns) and choruses by Schubert, in addition to the Renaissance-inspired Mass for Double Choir in E-Flat Major by Joseph Rheinberger, probably the only composer you can name who hailed from Liechtenstein. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Nov. 15 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 774-4105.)

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Harmonie Ensemble—Steven Richman conducts a program that includes two works featuring organist Stephen Hamilton: Poulenc's Organ Concerto and Barber's "Toccata Festiva." (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. 289-4100. Nov. 16 at 8.)

Sydney Symphony Orchestra—Edo de Waart conducts "Elevator Music," by the Down Under composer Graeme Koehne, as well as Beethoven's B-Flat-Major Piano Concerto (with Christian Zacharias) and Strauss's "Symphonia Domestica." (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 17 at 8.)

Sacred Music in a Sacred Space—The concert series spotlights the N. P. Mander organ of the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola through performances of chamber and choral works by Copland, Hindemith, Gabrieli, Kodály (his "Laudes Organi"), and Petr Eben. Kent Tritle directs, and Nancianne Parrella is the featured organist. (Park Ave. at 84th St. 288-2520. Nov. 17 at 8.)

RECITALS

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—The ensemble performs Beethoven's Trios in C Minor (Op. 1, No. 3) and in D Major (Op. 70, No. 1, the "Ghost"), his Variations in E-Flat Major (Op. 44), and Shostakovich's Cello Sonata. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 11 at 8.)

Two Times Four—Leading string quartets from two generations—the august Tokyo and the vernal St. Lawrence—team up for Shostakovich's "Two Pieces for String Octet" and Mendelssohn's ebullient Octet; the Tokyo foursome also offers Haydn's Quartet in G Major (Op. 76, No. 1). (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 11 at 8.)

Lukas Foss—An hour of performance and commentary during which this musical Jack-of-all-trades, distinguished as a composer, conductor, and pianist, plays and offers insights about the slow movement of Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" Sonata. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 12 at 7.)

Bargemusic—Nov. 12 at 7:30: The Ysaÿe String Quartet plays Beethoven's Quartet in D Minor (Op. 95, the "Serioso") and Mozart's Quartet in C Major (K. 515); the brothers Toby Hoffman (violist) and Gary Hoffman (cellist) join them for Brahms's G-Major Sextet. . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 4: Cho-Liang Lin and Mark Peskanov play Prokofiev's Sonata for Two Violins; the Hoffman brothers round out the ensemble for string quartets by Mozart (in C Major, K. 465, the "Dissonance") and Borodin (his Second). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

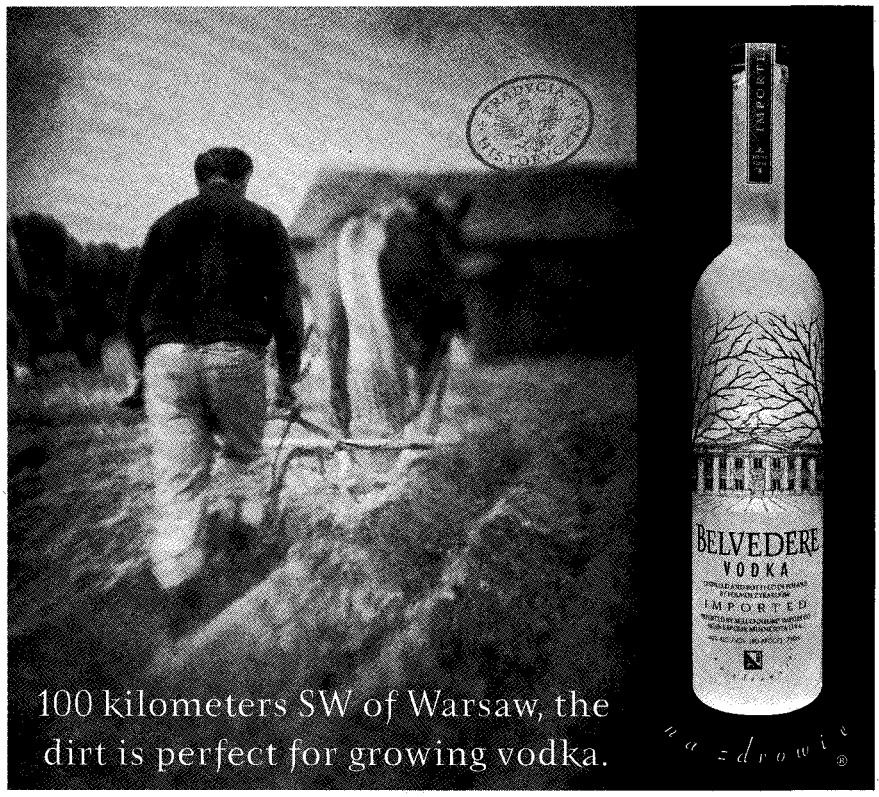
Lionheart—The men's vocal quintet performs chant and polyphony from twelfth-century France. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. Nov. 12 at 8. For information about tickets, call 642-8348.)

Orion String Quartet—Performing quartets by Barber and Dvořák (in F Major, Op. 96), as well as Wynton Marsalis's "At the Octoroon Balls." (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 13 at 8.)

New York's Ensemble for Early Music—The ensemble performs a troped plainsong Mass for Saint Martial, the patron saint of Aquitaine, composed in the early eleventh century by the monk and musician Ademar de Chabannes. In creating this work, Ademar was lending his support to a campaign to convince the Church to elevate Martial to the status of Apostle; the suppression of that initiative also spelled the end of plans to première this work (which had been scheduled for 1029), and it therefore lay unperformed for nearly a millennium, until the Ensemble for Early Music brought it before the public two years ago. (St. James Chapel, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Nov. 13-14 at 8 and Nov. 15 at 3. For information about tickets, call 749-6600.)

Marjana Lipovšek—Mezzo-soprano, performing works by Monteverdi, Schubert, Mahler, and Strauss. Pianist Anthony Spiri assists. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 15 at 2.)

Heidi Skok—Soprano, with several colleagues, in a program of songs and vocal chamber music by Ravel (his "Chansons Madécas-



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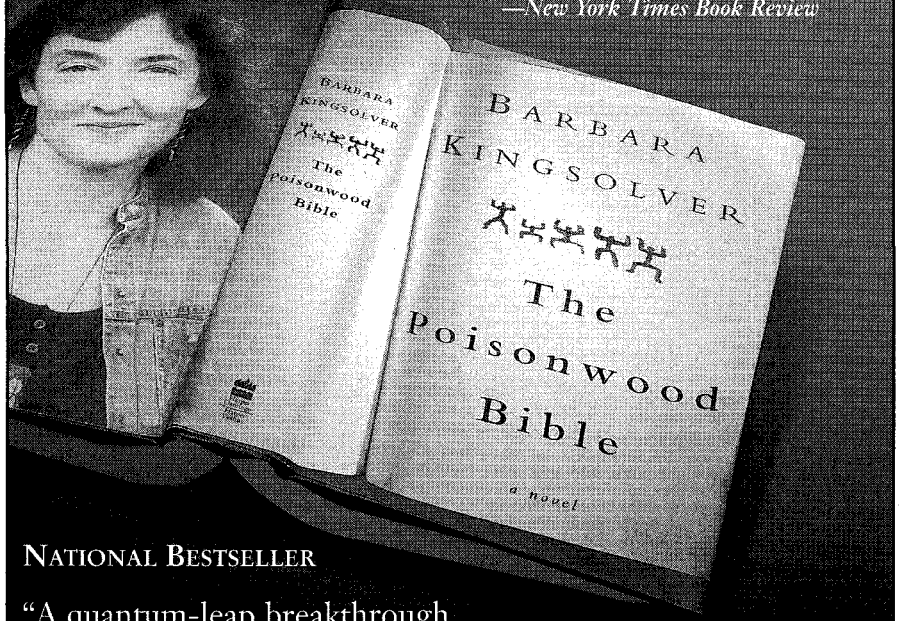

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ses"), Poulenc, Rorem, Stephen Paulus, Richard Hundley, and Ricky Ian Gordon. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. Nov. 15 at 3. Tickets at the door.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER—Last year, George Rochberg composed his "Eden: Out of Time and Out of Space," a chamber concerto for guitar and six players, as a musical meditation on the questions posed by Yeats: "Is Eden far away? Is Eden out of time and space?" The composer relates that his response was "to shut out—with quietness and other-worldliness—the clamor and clang of the raucous 'Garish Day,' to turn away its tumult and noise, to negate its stridency and chaos." Guitarist Eliot Fisk and members of the society offer this recent piece and a guitar quintet by Boccherini, in a concert that also includes Dvořák's A-Major String Sextet. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 15 at 5 and Nov. 17 at 7:30.)

JAMES GILES—The pianist performs the première of Lowell Liebermann's "Nocturne" and of "Collusions," a collaborative work by William Bolcom and Curtis Curtis-Smith. Completing the program are works by Medtner, Prokofiev, Copland, and Earl Wild. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 15 at 8.)

MITSUKO UCHIDA—The pianist offers Bach's G-Minor "English" Suite plus a passel of Chopin: the Two Nocturnes (Op. 62), the Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-Flat Major (Op. 61), and the Twenty-four Preludes (Op. 28). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 16 at 7:30.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

COMING OF AGE—The Big Apple Circus turns twenty-one this year, and, to judge from its latest production, "Happy On!," the nonprofit troupe that's dedicated to mixing theatre and traditional circus arts hasn't lost any of its youthful energy, or its ability to lure foreign talents. The Liaoning Acrobatic Troupe, from the People's Republic of China, are bungee-jumping and hoop-diving specialists. Wang Lixin, the Liaoning's compatriot, tosses soup bowls onto her head while riding a unicycle. And keeping command of the big top is British ringmaster Norman Barrett, who will also be, one hopes, in firm command of his troupe of trained budgies. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. For more information, call 721-6500. Through Jan. 10.)

READINGS—Nov. 11 at 6:30: By Tom Wolfe, from his new novel, "A Man in Full." (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.) . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 7:30: By Robert Creeley, Louise Glück, Marilyn Hacker, and other poets. Poet Robert Pinsky will introduce the evening, which is the first event in a three-day festival of readings and talks titled "What's American About American Poetry?" (New School, 66 W. 12th St. For more information, call 254-9628.) . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 7: By writers Ben Neihart, Carole Maso, Jack Murnighan, and Rachel Sherman, from their contributions to the anthology "Nerve: Literate Smut." (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 7: By twenty finalists for the 1998 National Book Awards, including novelist Alice McDermott ("Charming Billy"), nonfiction writer Edward Ball ("Slaves in the Family"), and poet Carl Phillips ("From the Devotions"). (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 229-5488.)

TALKS—Nov. 12 at 6: Nancy Meckler, artistic director of the theatre company Shared Experience, and playwright Helen Edmundson discuss adapting "Anna Karenina" for the stage. Anne Cattaneo, of Lincoln Center Theatre, is the moderator. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100.) . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 6:30: Michael Ignatieff talks about his new book, "Isaiah Berlin: A Life." (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 8: Gregory Deyermenjian, who recently returned from South America, relates tales of the Brazilian and Peruvian rain forest. (Explorers Club, 46 E. 70th St. 628-8383.)

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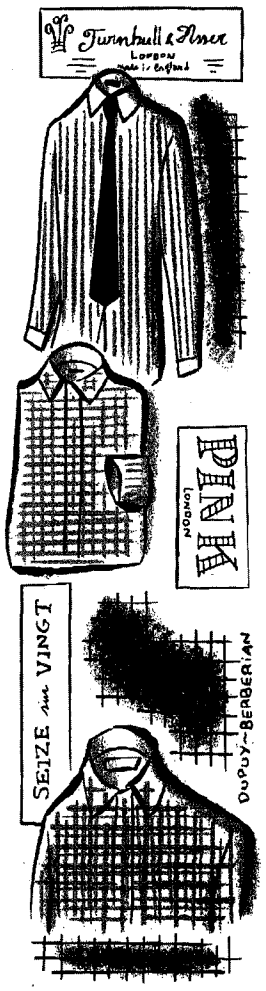
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

Get Shirty

BASIC black and its cousins—brown, beige, and gray—have been the de-rigueur fashion colors for so long that it's hard to remember the Peacock Revolution that lit up the sixties. Recently, however, there has been a revival of more vivid plumage, especially in men's dress shirts.

Jay Gatsby, who won back Daisy's heart with his outrageous cache of beautiful shirts, would have made a beeline for TURNBULL & ASSER (42 E. 57th St.; 752-5700). Just under a year ago, this citadel of British shirtmaking opened a store among the ready-to-wear boutiques on Fifty-seventh Street, in a five-story Dickensian town house. At the rear of the ground floor is the office of Robert Gillotte, who oversees the shop's custom-made-shirt department (T. & A. also sells shirts off the shelf, priced from $145 to $275).

Gillotte, who looks like Alan Arkin on an exceptionally well-dressed day, has a sharp eye for the overreaching customer. ("Confidence," he says, "sometimes steamrolls good taste.") Standing behind his mahogany desk on a recent Saturday morning, he brought out books of swatches—eight hundred fabrics and patterns to choose from—and pointed out an array of different cuffs and a battalion of wooden stands displaying eight different collars. (T. & A.'s bespoke shirts are priced from $185 to $325, and the minimum order is for six.) Indicating a two-button turn-back cuff—closed with hidden buttons instead of links—he said that, based on his close reading of Ian Fleming, this was the cuff that James Bond would have worn. He then unfurled a tape, with which he made fourteen measurements, including one of the client's wristwatch (so the cuff wouldn't catch on it). These details, he said, would be mailed to Turnbull & Asser's workshop in London's Jermyn Street, from which a pattern would emerge within six weeks. The first shirt—be it in houndstooth, plaid, or candy stripes—would be delivered as a tryout, allowing the customer to wear it a few times to detect any discomfort. The fit would then be modified accordingly—possibly by the patternmaker who cuts shirts for Prince Charles.



When THOMAS PINK opened its first, stamp-size shop, in London's Chelsea in the early eighties, the shirtmaker immediately attracted renegade T. & A. customers who were looking for dandyish details at a cheaper price. Now, there are ten Pink shops in London, one in Dublin, and a North American outpost in Manhattan (520 Madison Ave.; 838-1928). Pink's popularity has somewhat diluted its cultish following, and the fact that it advertises itself as a Jermyn Street shirtmaker—even though it is a neighborhood newcomer that has never offered bespoke garments—has prompted T. & A. holdouts to call it a "duty-free shop." Still, there's no denying Pink's panache; its shirts, whether French or two-button cuffed, have an easygoing Edwardian swagger, and the patterns come in bold stripes, solids, checks, and tattersalls. (Prices range from $110 to $175.) The firm's namesake, incidentally, was the eighteenth-century London tailor whose surname inspired the expression "in the pink."

To James Jurney, who is the co-owner of SEIZE SUR VINGT, a tiny boutique that sells shirts of his own design, the Brits' approach to shirtmaking is like their collars—stiff. Last summer, he and his wife opened their shop in East SoHo (243 Elizabeth St.; 343-0476), which sells subdued, Continental-style shirts for men and women, intended, Jurney says, "to look good with or without a tie." (Prices range from $100 to $170.) Tugging the sleeve of a blue shirt with an intricate herringbone pattern, he indicated how the stripes running down the sleeves matched up with the yoke at the shoulders. He then showed off a pair of mother-of-pearl cufflinks which he includes, free, with the purchase of a French-cuffed shirt—an effort, he said, to "break the silk-knot juggernaut."

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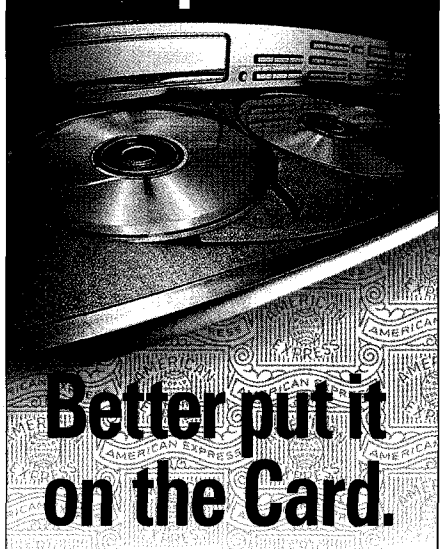

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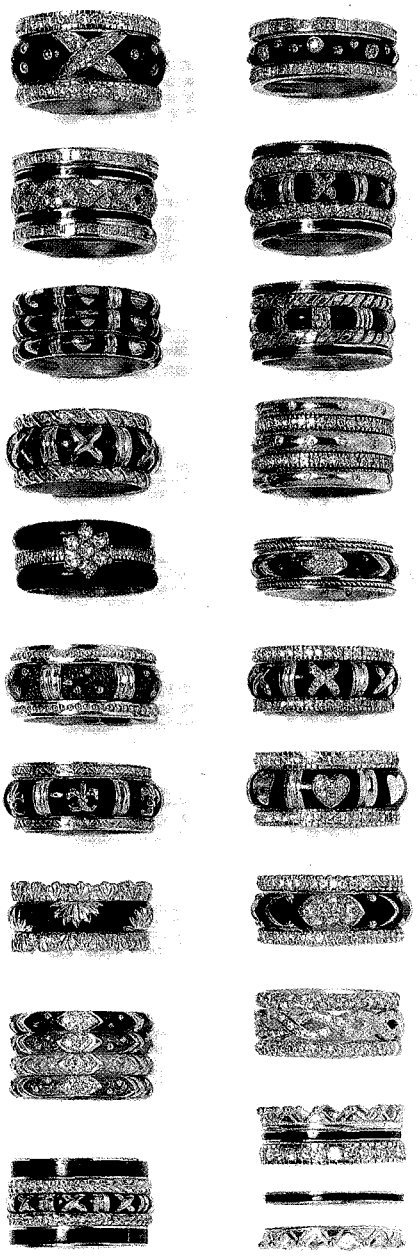

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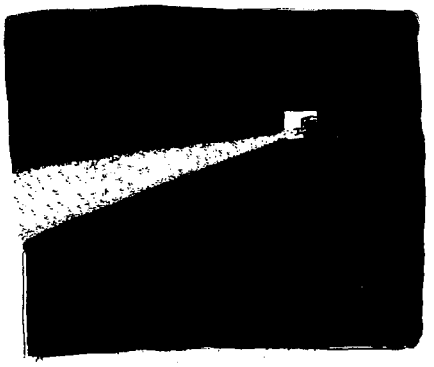

THE MOVIES

OPENING

Dancing at Lughnasa—Director Pat O'Connor's film of the Brian Friel play about five Irish Catholic sisters (Meryl Streep, Catherine McCormack, Sophie Thompson, Kathy Burke, and Brid Brennan) in 1936 who await the arrival of their long-absent elder brother (Michael Gambon). Opening Nov. 13. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Union Square.)

Hard Core Logo—Bruce McDonald's fictional documentary of a punk-rock band's reunion tour through western Canada. Opening Nov. 13.

I'll Be Home for Christmas—A comedy about a California college student (Jonathan Taylor Thomas) who struggles to get home to New York for Christmas while dressed in a Santa Claus suit. Directed by Arlene Sanford. Opening Nov. 13. (Guild.)

I Still Know What You Did Last Summer—A thriller about college students (Jennifer Love Hewitt, Brandy, Mekhi Phifer, and Matthew Settle) who spend the July Fourth weekend in the Bahamas. Directed by Danny Cannon. Opening Nov. 13.

Meet Joe Black—Death takes on human form and falls in love, in this remake of the 1934 film "Death Takes a Holiday." With Brad Pitt, Anthony Hopkins, and Claire Forlani; directed by Martin Brest. Opening Nov. 13.

River Red—Eric Drilling's drama about two brothers (Tom Everett Scott and David Moscow) who kill their abusive father. Opening Nov. 13. (Sutton.)

Ten Benny—A tale of friendship and gambling, directed by Eric Bross. Opening Nov. 13. (Angelika Film Center.)

Welcome to Woop Woop—A comedy about a wanted con man from New York (Johnathon Schaech) who escapes to the Australian outback. Also with Susie Porter and Rod Taylor; directed by Stephan Elliott. Opening Nov. 13. (Union Square.)

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

American History X—Young Edward Norton, who seemed to have no body at all in the recent "Rounders"—he faded away from the camera, like a ghost—is here muscled up and swaggering, with a swastika the size of a giant tarantula emblazoned on his chest. He plays a skinhead neo-Nazi in Venice Beach, California, and screenwriter David McKenna has composed some shrewd tirades for him that push only slightly past standard white working-class resentment. Norton gives the young thug an ambiguous erotic allure; he's almost appealing. Everything else in this melodrama, directed and photographed by the British commercial director Tony Kaye, is to be regretted—the alternation between color (the present) and black-and-white (the past); the mopey performance by Edward Furlong as Norton's kid brother, who is haplessly turning into a skinhead himself; the confused political implications of the story, especially the violent ending, which entirely reverses the direction in which the material has been going. Kaye's work is self-important and garish. The movie was taken away from him during the editing phase. It should have been.—*David Denby* (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, and Lincoln Square.)

Antz—The latest showpiece for computer animation, with all the contoured, suspiciously gleaming perfection that this entails. In this case, most of the characters are ants—a curious choice, since they all tend to look roughly the same, and it takes a while to sort out the heroes from the villains. Fortunately, help is at hand from the absurdly starry cast of voices; the leading ant, Z, is played by Woody Allen, and his new royal girlfriend by Sharon Stone. (In your dreams, Woody.) Gene Hackman speaks the role of a murderous general, with Christopher Walken as his sidekick; best of all is Sylvester Stallone, cast completely against type as a dim but helpful hunk of brawn. The plot is a swift, if confusing, account of Z's ascent to a station above that of his millions of fellow-workers; the directors—Eric Darnell and Tim Johnson—seem slightly unsure about what they think of old-fashioned working-class solidarity.—*Anthony Lane* (10/19/98) (Embassy 2, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and 64th and 2nd.)

Apt Pupil—Overwrought and unpleasant nonsense about a spoiled suburban teen-ager (Brad Renfro) who blackmails an alcoholic old Nazi (Ian McKellen) into telling him stories of the atrocities he committed in a concentration camp. The boy is quickly drawn into the mental orbit of the vicious old man, and the two of them take turns playing nasty tricks on one another. It's meant to be a parable about fascination—the dangers of looking into the abyss, the hidden Nazi in all of us, and so on—but the material feels tired, gimmicky, and sour. Renfro curls his mouth downward and gives us no reason to care about him; the great McKellen, bearded and speaking in a catarrhal rasp, is actually the more sympathetic of the two. Director Bryan Singer ruins a great moment of sheer camp—McKellen, in a Nazi uniform, stomping and saluting as he remembers the good old days—with a lamentable overuse of montage. From a novella by Stephen King, adapted by Brandon Boyce.—*D.D.* (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

Elizabeth—A biographical film about Queen Elizabeth I of England as she begins her reign. With Cate Blanchett, Geoffrey Rush, Joseph Fiennes, and Christopher Eccleston; directed by Shekhar Kapur. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, and Village Theatre VII.)

Gods and Monsters—In the nineteen-fifties, the British-born director James Whale, who had lent depth and dignity to the horror film with "Frankenstein" and "Bride of Frankenstein," idled away his time, all but forgotten by the movie industry, in Pacific Palisades, California; eventually, he drowned in his pool. Bill Condon's elegant and tactful picture, founded on Christopher Bram's novel "Father of Frankenstein," wonders what might have happened in those final days. The inquiry draws fine performances from Ian McKellen as the dandyish Whale and from Brendan Fraser as his (wholly fictitious) gardener, Clayton Boone, with whom the older man becomes obsessed. It is more than a crush, not least because of Boone's head: blockish and flat-topped, it reminds you instantly of Frankenstein's monster, and it leads Whale into a reverie about that forlorn figure. The film leans rather too heavily on Whale's lubricity, but the flashbacks to his movie sets and the snapshots of sharklike Hollywood society are done with great loyalty and wit. Not since "The Spirit of the Beehive," in which a little girl met the same lumbering monster, has anyone made it seem so natural to

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be haunted. With Lynn Redgrave as a Puritan housekeeper.—*A.L.* (11/9/98) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

The Great Dictator (1940)—Smack in the middle of this sprawling social-protest farce, Charlie Chaplin comes up with a prime scene for each of his two roles. As the Fascist dictator Hynkel, who rules under the sign of the double cross, he does a marvellous ballet with a globe balloon; immediately afterward, as a Jewish barber who's indistinguishable from the Little Tramp, he lathers and shaves and slaps a customer dry to Brahms's "Hungarian Dance No. 5." Some trenchant bits surround these high points: Hynkel's Teutonic oratorical jabberwocky is acidly amusing, and so is his rivalry with his fellow Fascist dictator, Napaloni (Jack Oakie). But too often Chaplin stumbles between expert yet uninspired slapstick and soapboxing; as the film critic Otis Ferguson wrote, "The gulf between a kick in the pants and a pogrom is something even his talent for the humorous-pathetic will not cross."—*Michael Sragow* (Symphony Space; Nov. 17.)

Happiness—The Jordans (Ben Gazzara and Louise Lasser) are ending their frayed marriage, while their daughters (Jane Adams, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Cynthia Stevenson) look wearily for love, and their respectable son-in-law (Dylan Baker) dreams of slaughter and plans his molestation of underage boys. Just an ordinary day in New Jersey, as far as filmmaker Todd Solondz is concerned, but his obsession with sexual aberration somehow flattens his roster of characters into uniformity; when the large, kindly Kristina (Camryn Manheim) turns out to have dismembered her doorman and frozen his body parts, you can hardly be bothered to take offense.—*A.L.* (10/19/98) (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

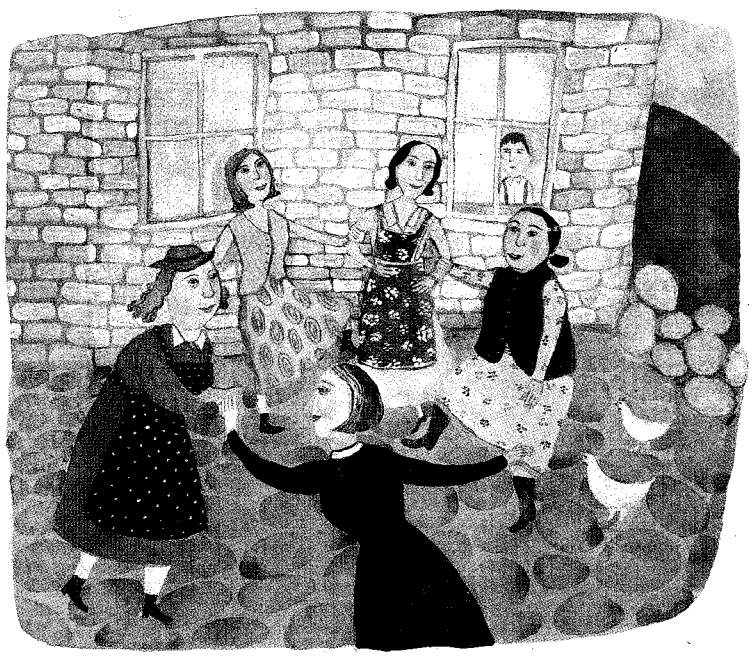
Life Is Beautiful—Roberto Benigni directs, and plays the lead in, this film about life in a small Tuscan town during the Second World War. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Angelika Film Center and Paris.)

Living Out Loud—Richard LaGravenese, who has written some popular films for others to direct ("The Fisher King," "The Bridges of Madison County"), now gets behind the camera to film one of his own—a bittersweet comedy about a lonely Upper East Side divorcée (Holly Hunter) and the heavily-in-debt elevator operator (Danny DeVito) who falls in love with her. LaGravenese's script (it was inspired by two Chekhov stories) is filled with small details that allow the two leads to bring out each other's warm, humorous side. There's a gentle tug to the story that sustains it pretty much through to its ridiculously upbeat ending. Queen Latifah co-stars as a classy night-club singer who befriends the couple, and her performance radiates the kind of sexy polish that makes everyone look good.—*Bruce Diones* (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 72nd Street East, and Village East Cinemas.)

A Place Called Chiapas—Nettie Wild's earnest but vital documentary about the Zapatista rebellion in southeastern Mexico. Wild could have delved further into the motives of the Zapatistas' witty and media-savvy leader, Subcomandante Marcos, and, especially, into Marcos's relationship with his Indian followers. But her footage of masked rebels, high-handed government negotiators, and the strutting army is valuable nonetheless. She ends up focussing on impoverished Zapatista sympathizers who live north of the rebel zone. The rebels are unable to protect them, the government writes them off, and they are driven from their homes, harassed, and murdered by posses of hungry young reactionaries. It took guts to get this on camera. In English and Spanish.—*Sarah Kerr* (Film Forum.)

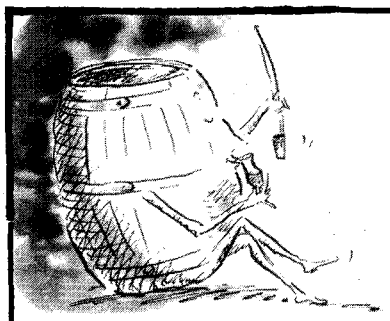
Pleasantville—A nerdy brother (Tobey Maguire) and a slutty sister (Reese Witherspoon) who live in a dysfunctional single-parent home get beamed into an idyllic fifties TV show and discover that family values weren't so great after all. Gary Ross's fantasy is a much needed plea for the value of art and freethinking. With the help of John Lindley's cinematography—flat, shiny black-and-white to symbolize conformity and voluptuous, 3-D color to symbolize freedom and emotion—it's also a visual stunner. But Ross, who wrote the screenplays for "Dave" and "Big," lacks the imagination to fully develop his own most intriguing ideas. Is the film about then or now, TV or life? It's never quite made clear, and in the end Ross retreats to his old formula—the therapy comedy, in which happiness is just a matter of expressing yourself.—*S.K.* (Coronet Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 19th Street East 6, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

Practical Magic—Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman play sisters who are witches but try to live normal lives. One day, in a crisis, they finally cast a spell and immediately get into trouble; Aidan Quinn is the detective/Mr. Right who comes to investigate. Griffin



GISELLE POTTER

Opening Nov. 13, Pat O'Connor's "Dancing at Lughnasa."



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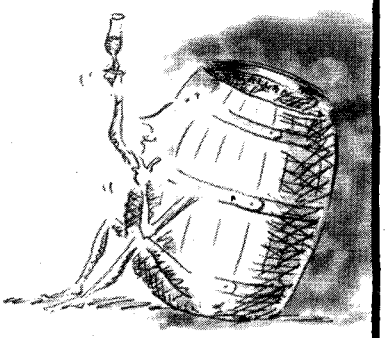

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Dunne's plodding adaptation of Alice Hoffman's novel can't decide whether it's a horror show, a cute comedy, or a soap opera. Bullock handles the weepy end as gracefully as anyone could, and Kidman adds spark as the sexually looser of the two sisters. Dianne Wiest and Stockard Channing offer uncharacteristically lifeless support as maiden aunts and mentors in witchcraft.—*S.K.* (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and State.)

The Siege—A thriller about terrorists in New York City, with Denzel Washington, Annette Bening, and Bruce Willis. Directed by Edward Zwick. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

To Be or Not to Be (1942)—Some people have great affection for this anti-Nazi comedy-melodrama, with its knockabout seriousness. The stars are Carole Lombard and Jack Benny, bizarrely cast as a famous Polish actress and her actor husband; the plot involves actors disguising themselves as Nazis in order to foil the Nazis. Ernst Lubitsch, who directed, starts off on the wrong foot and never gets his balance; the performers yowl their lines, and the burlesque of the Nazis, who cower before their superior officers, is more crudely gleeful than funny. It was Lombard's last film; two weeks after completing it, she was killed in a plane crash while on a tour to sell defense bonds.—*Pauline Kael* (Symphony Space; Nov. 17.)

Velvet Goldmine—Quite an achievement: the American director Todd Haynes revisits the world of London glam rock and manages to make it look dull. He and his costume designer certainly lay on the peacock flamboyance of the nineteen-seventies, but none of the strange creatures concerned appear to be having any fun. Jonathan Rhys Meyers, of whom great things have been predicted, gives a curiously thin and flat-voiced performance as Brian Slade, a David Bowie figure of suitably indeterminate sexual preference. The real Bowie would not allow his songs to be used, so we get rip-offs instead—accomplished enough, but incapable of generating the required nostalgia. Ewan McGregor has more of a laugh as Curt Wild, a version of Iggy Pop, but the picture refuses to follow his example. It has a busy surface, with Haynes switching between high Ken Russell camp and dreary journalistic investigation, but the tactic feels less like the search for a Rosebud than desperation. Plenty of glitter, though, if you like that sort of thing. With Toni Collette and Eddie Izzard.—*A.L.* (11/9/98) (Gotham Cinema, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII. . . . ¶ American Museum of the Moving Image; Nov. 15.)

White Cargo (1942)—After starting Hedy Lamarr off big in this country (in "Algiers"), Hollywood could never quite figure out what to do with her. So here she is in her eleventh American picture, in dark suntan makeup and bangles, as a sexy savage who drives white men wild. She wiggles tropically and announces "I am Tondelayo"—a line that served a generation of female impersonators. The setting of this meant-to-be-steamy melodrama is Africa, but you wouldn't know it except for the portentous drums that accompany the credits; nobody ever seems to go outside the headquarters of the rubber plantation. Walter Pidgeon is cast as the tough cynic, which was usually the Clark Gable role. Directed by Richard Thorpe—so routinely that even the lighting looks stagey.—*P.K.* (A Different Light Bookstore; Nov. 15.)

ALSO PLAYING

Armageddon (reviewed in our issue of 7/13/98): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Belly:** Criterion Center, East 85th Street, 62nd & Broadway, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **Beloved** (10/26 & 11/2/98): Embassy 3, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **The Big Chill:** Lincoln Square and 64th and 2nd. . . . **The Celebration:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema. . . . **The Impostors:** Cinema 3rd Avenue and The Screening Room. . . . **John Carpenter's Vampires:** Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **Lolita** (2/23&3/2/98): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **Love is the Devil** (10/12/98): Quad Cinema. . . . **The Opposite of Sex:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **Ronin** (10/5/98): Criterion Center and First & 62nd Cinemas. . . . **Saving Private Ryan** (8/3/98): Embassy 1 and 59th Street East Cinema. . . . **There's Something About Mary:** Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Regency. . . . **The Waterboy:** Cinema I, 84th Street Sixplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **The Wizard of Oz:** Astor Plaza, Coronet Cinema, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.

MATINÉE CAMP: *Born in Moravia (in 1904), educated in Vienna, and employed mostly on Hollywood's Poverty Row, the director Edgar G. Ulmer, currently being saluted at Film Forum 2, built a filmography like nobody else's. His only mainstream classic was the 1934 horror film "The Black Cat" (playing Nov. 11 and Nov. 22), and even that is gloriously outré—a mesh of satanic schemes and Freudian desires, starring Boris Karloff as Austria's most celebrated engineer and Bela Lugosi as Hungary's most renowned psychiatrist. Among film buffs, Ulmer is best known for his 1946 nightmare road movie, "Detour" (Nov. 13–15), but some of his more obscure B (or X) films are livelier, including his 1945 boy-detective thriller, "Strange Illusion" (Nov. 17), and his threadbare 1951 alien-invasion fable, "The Man from Planet X" (Nov. 13–15). These movies come off as oddly sophisticated Saturday-matinée stuff; their campiness derives not from incompetence but from intelligence pushed to budgetary limits. Even at his worst, Ulmer was never less than the thinking man's Ed Wood.*

ERIK T. JOHNSON

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2 and 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**Theatre 2:** Nov. 11: "The Black Cat" (1934, Edgar G. Ulmer) and "The Wolf Man" (1941, George Waggner). . . . ¶ Nov. 12: "Abbott & Costello Meet Frankenstein" (1948, Charles Barton) and "Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man" (1943, Roy William Neill). . . . ¶ A program of films directed by Edgar G. Ulmer. Nov. 13-15: "Detour" (1946) and "The Man from Planet X" (1951). . . . Nov. 17: "Strange Illusion" (1945) and "The Strange Woman" (1946). . . . ¶ A program of Buster Keaton films. Nov. 16: "Our Hospitality" (1923; silent) and three silent short films: "Cops" (1922), "The Playhouse" (1921), and "Convict 13" (1920). . . . **Theatre 3:** "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of recent films from Germany; all in German, with English subtitles. Nov. 12 at 2:30: "Bertolt Brecht: Love, Revolution, and Other Dangers" (Jutta Brückner). . . . Nov. 12 at 6 and Nov. 13 at 3: "Here Is My Life: Marieluise, Child of Golzow" (Barbara Junge and Winifried Junge). . . . Nov. 13 at 6 and Nov. 14 at 2:30: "Life, Love & Celluloid" (Juliane Lorenz). . . . Nov. 13 at 8:15 and Nov. 15 at 2:30: "Lights from Afar" (Helga Reidemeister). . . . Nov. 14 at 5: "Barluschke" (Thomas Heise). . . . Nov. 15 at 5: "The Wrapped Reichstag" (Jörg Daniel and Wolfram Hissen). . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 6: A program of short films by Anne Robertson, one program in a series about the history of 8-mm. film and video in the United States. . . . ¶ A program of films from Brazil; all in Portuguese, with English subtitles. Nov. 13 at 6: "The Time of the Star" (1985, Suzana Amaral). . . . Nov. 13 at 8: "Bye Bye Brazil" (1980, Carlos Diegues). . . . Nov. 14 at 2: "São Bernardo" (1972, Leon Hirszman). . . . Nov. 14 at 5: "Everything's Fine" (1978, Arnaldo Jabor). . . . Nov. 15 at 2: "Assalto ao Trem Pagador" (1962, Roberto Farias). . . . Nov. 15 at 5: "Strong Meat" (1985, André Klotzel). . . . Nov. 16 at 2:30: "They Don't Wear Black Tie" (1981, Hirszman). . . . Nov. 16 at 6: "A Margem" (1967, Ozualdo Candeias). . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 3 and 6:30: "Bezhin Meadow" (1937, Sergei Eisenstein).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films from Israel; in Hebrew, with English subtitles. Nov. 11 at 2 and 6:15: "Summer of Aviya" (1988, Eli Cohen). . . . Nov. 11 at 4 and 8:15: "The Smile of the Lamb" (1987, Shimon Dotan). . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 2 and 6: "Trouble in Paradise" (1932, Ernst Lubitsch). . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 3:45 and 7:50: "Sunrise" (1927, F. W. Murnau; silent). . . . ¶ A program of films by Dariush Mehrjui and other Iranian directors; all in Farsi, with English subtitles. Nov. 13 at 2, Nov. 14 at 4, and Nov. 15 at 8: "The Cow" (1969). . . . Nov. 13 at 4:10 and Nov. 14 at 8:45: "Dead End" (1978, Parvid Sayyad). . . . Nov. 13 at 6:15: "Leila" (1997). . . . Nov. 13 at 9 and Nov. 14 at 6:15: "The Pear Tree" (1998). . . . Nov. 15 at 2: "Bag of Rice" (1996, Mohammed-Ali Talebi). . . . Nov. 16 at 2 and 6:40: "Downpour" (1972, Bahram Beyza'i). . . . Nov. 16 at 4:30 and 9:10: "Postman" (1972; with German subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 4 and 6: "Love Me Tender" (1956, Robert D. Webb).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of films directed by Todd Haynes. Nov. 14 at 2: Short films. . . . Nov. 14 at 4:30: "Poison" (1991). . . . Nov. 15 at 2: "Safe" (1995). . . . Nov. 15 at 5: "Velvet Goldmine" (†).

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3587)—A program of French films, 1958-98; in French, with English subtitles. Nov. 11 at 2:30 and Nov. 13 at 7:30: "Thérèse" (1986; Alain Cavalier). . . . Nov. 11 at 6: "Le Boucher" (1969, Claude Chabrol). . . . Nov. 13 at 2:30: "Irma Vep" (1996,

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Olivier Assayas). . . . Nov. 14 at 2:30: "The Mother and the Whore" (1974, Jean Eustache). . . . Nov. 14 at 7:30: "JLG by JLG" (1994, Jean-Luc Godard).

Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770)—The new four-theatre complex, called the Rose Cinemas, will open on Nov. 13. Call the theatre for film and time schedules.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—A retrospective (through Dec. 22) of films featuring Catherine Deneuve. Nov. 17 at 12:30, 3:30, and 6:30: "Repulsion" (1965, Roman Polanski). . . . Nov. 17 at 9: "The Hunger" (1983, Tony Scott).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—A program of films made by United Artists. Nov. 17 at 7: "To Be or Not to Be" (†). . . . Nov. 17 at 9: "The Great Dictator" (†).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Nov. 15 at 7, the feature will be "White Cargo" (†).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—Nov. 11 at 8:30: "In My Corner" (1998, Ricki Stern and William Rexer). . . . Nov. 12 at 8:30: "The Candidate" (1989, Alexander Kluge; in German). . . . Nov. 13 at 9: "Germany in Autumn" (1978, Kluge; in German, with no subtitles). . . . Nov. 14 at 10:30: "Une Simple Histoire" (1958, Marcel Hanoun; in French, with no subtitles). . . . Nov. 17 at 8: "Zvenigora" (1928, Alexandr Dovzhenko; in Russian, with no subtitles).

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

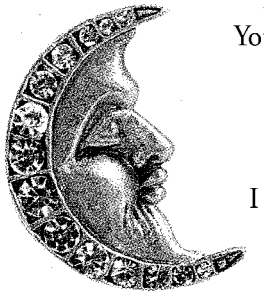
Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy 1, 2, and 3, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 14th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

HAVE WE MET?

Moon:
Yes, aeons ago
we were closer.

Sun:
You weren't wearing glittering
faux diamonds then.

Moon:
No, I'm wiser now,
I don't want to be eclipsed.



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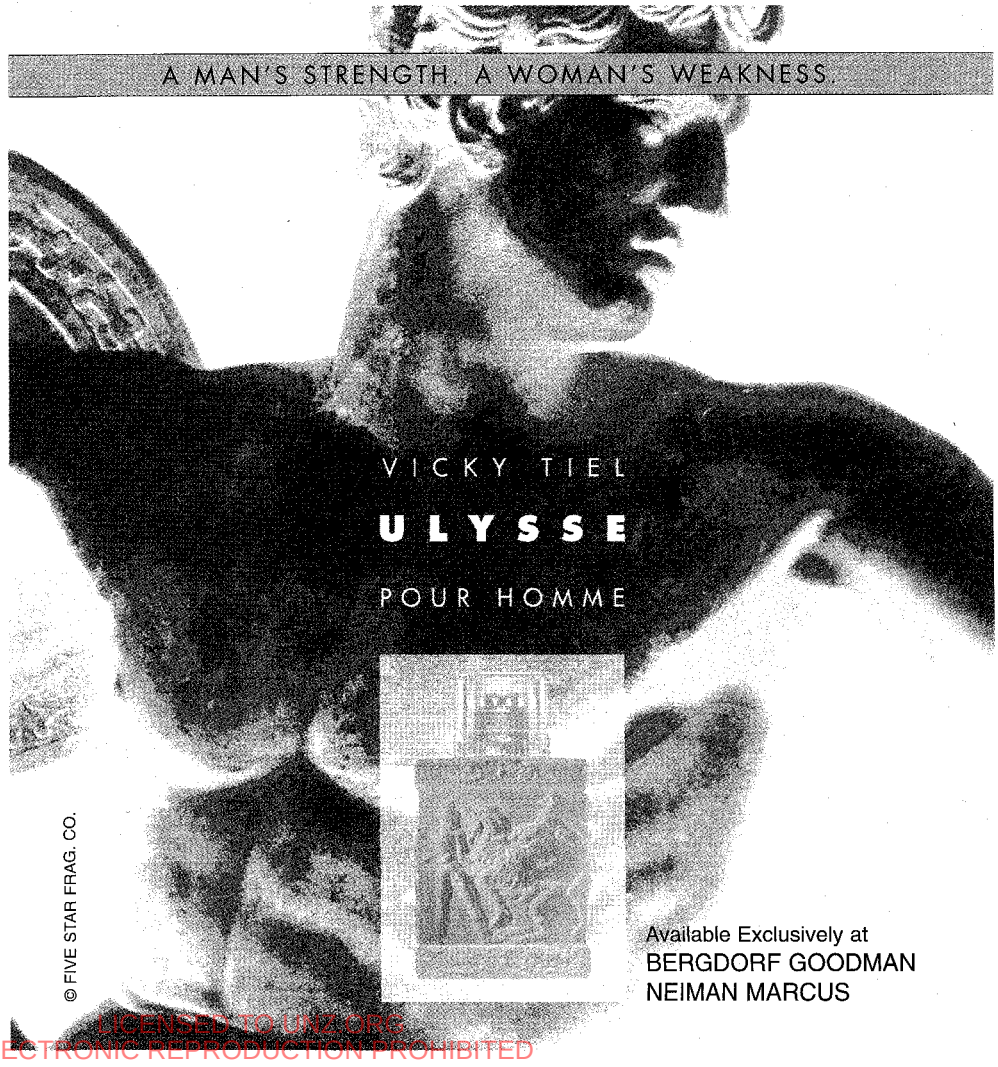

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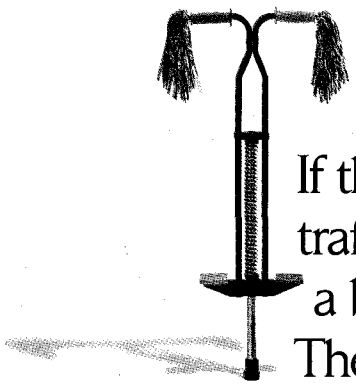

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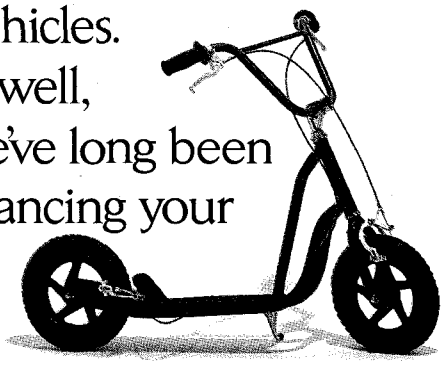

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT

Election Day calls a halt to the Night of the Living Dead.

MISTAH IMPEACHMENT, he dead. Last Tuesday's election inflicted a gut shot. Then, on Friday, the coup de grâce, delivered by Newt Gingrich via his own temple: after an orgy of Republican recrimination, the Speaker of the House pulled the trigger on himself. Before last week, everyone knew the drill: the House Judiciary Committee would hold Watergate-style hearings; the House Republicans would gavel through articles of impeachment; the vote in the Senate would fall short of the two-thirds needed for conviction. Now the only suspense is whether the matter will get as far as the House floor before a deal is struck to end it.

Henry Hyde, the Judiciary Committee chairman, hastily redrew his schedule after the returns came in. Even so, the Washington creature called "the impeachment process" will stagger on, zombie-like, awhile longer. That is crazy, because the result is preordained. But, in our sclerotic, lawyer-plagued investigative culture, Washington is crawling with these process zombies. Kenneth Starr's grand jurors, arms outstretched, lurching toward the millennium . . . Bill Gates's black-robed pursuers, murmuring about years-old browser technology . . . Mr. Hyde's panel of Mr. Hydes, quaffing pornographic potions. Run!

James Madison, the saintly and safely dead Founding Father, would not be pleased. He's the framer most responsible for the impeachment clause of the Constitution. And impeachment, as he and his colleagues saw it, was to be reserved for extraordinary occasions, when a broad national consensus had concluded that a President's removal was required for the political health of the state. That idea remains sound today. What has changed is how we come to these conclusions. Until recently, Congress trusted itself to decide when to initiate impeachment proceedings. In Watergate, the process unfolded organically, as public and congressional discontent with President Nixon grew slowly and in tandem. But the independent-counsel law has, in effect, handed the initiative to an unelected and virtually unchecked prosecutor. It wasn't the public's wishes, or Congress's, that set the wheels of impeachment turning. It was Kenneth Starr's.

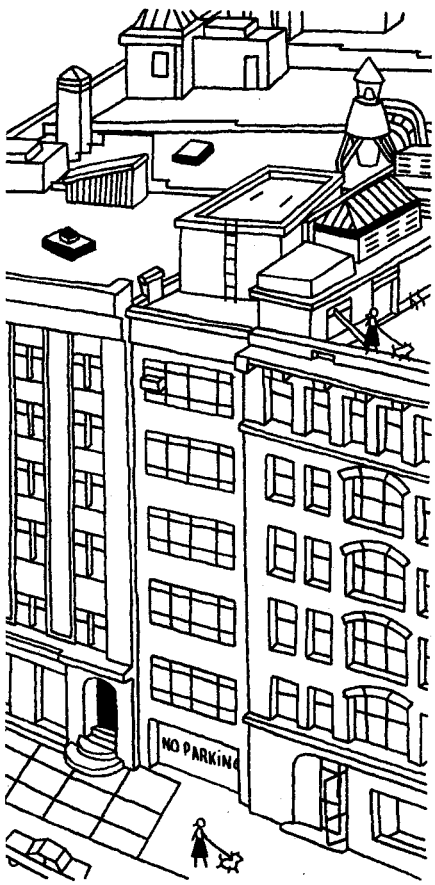

ILLUSTRATION BY LAURENT CILLUFFO

Like every process controlled by lawyers, impeachment keeps moving more and more slowly. In 1868—the first and still the only time the House of Representatives has gone the distance on a Presidential impeachment—the pace was not set by process zombies. It was quick: two days in a House committee; two days later, the impeachment vote in the full House; a month later, a trial in the Senate. And the Andrew Johnson case was a squeaker: his Presidency survived by one vote. The Bill Clinton case is a foregone conclusion, but, even so, months may pass before it is fully resolved. And even if it should be wrapped up tomorrow the process would not have been exactly speedy. Starr is now deep in the fifth year of his investigation, and its original subject—the Clintons' investment in the Whitewater land deal—took place in 1978, when Monica Lewinsky was five years old. Because of statutes of limitations and the overtaxed patience of the American people, virtually nothing that Starr may say about Whitewater can matter anymore.

In a real sense, the length of many contemporary investigations determines their result. One floor away from Starr's long-suffering grand jury, the Justice Department is plodding ahead with its antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft. The case grew out of an investigation that began in 1990—in software terms, the Late Pleistocene era. The technology market has changed so much since then, and will change so much more by the time any result in the case is decided on appeal, that the prosecution is almost guaranteed to be superfluous. Much the same thing happened in the antitrust case against I.B.M.: it was finally abandoned in 1982, after more than a decade. The verdict, if there had been one, would have entirely ceased to matter.

The question now is when the im-

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peachment process will catch up to its result. There's still no limit to how much goo the Republicans can ladle into the machinery, even though the election has dampened their enthusiasm. Hyde proposes to call none other than the independent counsel himself as his only witness, and that could turn the hearings into a zombie Starr turn—the Nooky Horror Picture Show.

Impeachment used to be a once-in-a-century exception to politics as usual. Yet until the voters intervened impeachment was being treated as if it were the budget or the highway bill—just another item on the legislative calendar. And the impeachment of Clinton was always far more popular among political and journalistic insiders than among the people. The election, as the historian Sean Wilentz points out, has brought about a curious reversal. Madison's idea was that the constitutional machinery would enable the élites to restrain the passions of the mob. This time, though, it was the élites that needed restraining. And it was the mob that restrained them. —JEFFREY TOOBIN

FISH OUT OF WATER DEPT.

Straight from the Himalayas, a well-connected Sherpa hits his stride.

THE Wednesday before the New York City Marathon, Pemba Sherpa showed up at Pat Manocchia's door, on West Sixty-seventh Street, hoping to run the second marathon of his life. Pemba, who is twenty-two years old, is one of about twenty-five thousand Sherpas, an ethnic group from the Himalayas best known these days for schlepping the heavy backpacks of Western trekkers when they need to take a snapshot or a hit from an oxygen tank. Before this trip, the biggest city Pemba had been in was Namche Bazaar, a town of a few hundred nestled in the Nepalese mountains. He had never seen a car, taken a shower without "making" the hot water first, or seen a person scoop up after a dog with a Ziploc mitten. As the elevator door closed in Manocchia's building, Pemba panicked, but by the time he got out, on the eighth floor, he had decided that elevators were "very good." Now, he said, if they could only get one of these on Everest.

Pemba had met Manocchia on a trek earlier this year. It was a stroke of luck for both of them. Manocchia, who owns La Palestra, an elegant fitness salon on the Upper West Side, is known in certain circles (the ones in which Madonna orbits, for example) as the man who turns average rich people into marathon runners. And Pemba, either through good genes or by dint of lugging water up mountains and chasing wayward yaks, is a natural runner. He placed fourth in the 1997 Everest Marathon, the first race he'd ever run. Everest has the highest starting line of any marathon—17,600 feet—and its 26.2 miles ramble across packed snow, thousand-foot crests, and flimsy rope bridges. When Manocchia met Pemba, he had an idea: fly the Sherpa to Manhattan, show him the town, and enter him in the New York City Marathon as a sort of experiment.

Pemba Sherpa and Sandy Hill

Manocchia and his fellow-trekkers left Pemba with an open offer of a ticket to New York, and so, one day, Pemba set out on foot for the airstrip in Lukla. After a forty-hour journey, he was picked up at Kennedy Airport by two of his patrons, who deposited him at Manocchia's building. On Thursday morning, with only three days to go before the marathon, Pemba still needed his race number, some shorts, and a pair of sneakers.

Manocchia helped him with the race entry and the shoes, and Sandy Hill, a Manhattan socialite who had also met Pemba trekking (on the deadly Everest expedition that was the subject of Jon Krakauer's "Into Thin Air"), took the Sherpa on a shopping expedition to Niketown, on Fifty-seventh Street. "I asked Pemba what he liked in Niketown, and he said, 'Everything,'" Hill recalls. "What's your favorite thing in New York? 'Everything.' What's the funniest thing? 'Everything, everything.'"

That night, Pemba went to the Sony IMAX Theatre to see "Everest," the first movie he'd seen in a theatre. Over breakfast the next day, Pemba didn't recognize the bluish substance (jelly) on his "round bread" (a bagel). He does, however, know how to make an excellent *caffé latte*, thanks to trekkers who taught him to use an espresso pot on the way up Everest.

In the days before the race, Pemba went to a Rangers game ("like yak fighting") and visited the Empire State Building (the view was "cool," but not as exciting as the Coke machine in the observation-deck lobby). As the cannon went off at the foot of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge to start the marathon, Pemba felt as normal as you can feel while jogging alongside more human beings than you have cumulatively seen in your entire life. He ran well, though in Mile 18 his new sneakers began to chafe. He thought about running barefoot but decided just to throw his socks away.

Back at La Palestra, a team of masseuses and a catered lunch were waiting for Manocchia's group of twenty-one marathoners. Someone phoned from Central Park to say that Pemba had finished in three hours and fifty-two minutes, a particularly respectable time for a runner who has never trained. But half an hour later there was no sign of him. Cell phones were drawn, a rescue team dispatched. A few minutes later, Pemba strolled in smiling, claiming he'd stopped for a banana. After a bit of coaxing, he admitted that he'd got lost. —DEVIN FRIEDMAN

HELP WANTED

U.K. Poet Laureate. £70/yr. Fondness for Royals a must.

WHEN England's worst-ever Poet Laureate died, in 1913, the London *Times* wrote, in surprise, "For some reason, the general public appears to have taken an unprecedented interest in the question who was to succeed Mr. Alfred Austin." Here

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we go again. Since the death of Ted Hughes, on October 28th, half the British media world has engaged in a cacophony of speculation about which poet should step into the murky limelight of the modern Laureateship.

As salaried jobs go, the post's attractions are hard to fathom. True, the Poet Laureate is chosen by the Queen from a list (these days, a list of one) supplied by the Prime Minister, who is himself advised by several bodies, including the Arts Council and the Royal Society of Literature. True, the Laureate becomes a member of the Royal Household. But ever since John Dryden was appointed the first Court poet, in 1668, the pay has remained paltry: now a pathetic seventy pounds a year plus "a butt of sack," or barrel of wine. You don't get an office, a desk, a computer, a car, a secretary, or an expense account.

Granted, the work is scarcely arduous. You are expected to write "occasional" verses commemorating Royal or national events—an ode in celebration of a Royal birth or a battle won, an elegy for a Royal demise or a national defeat—and thus to represent the feelings of the nation, in a voice that is neither too erudite nor too demotic. In modern practice, this means that the Laureate "occasionally," grudgingly, delivers a thin, unenthusiastic little effusion (while complaining about the awfulness of writing poetry to order) that is immediately trashed by the press. When Sir John Betjeman (Poet Laureate 1972-84) celebrated the wedding of Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips, in 1973, with a poem that began, "Hundreds of birds in the air / And millions of leaves on the pavement / Then the bells pealing on / Over palace and people outside," he was abused for underplaying the nation's rapture. It was, he told the *Times*, one of the most laborious poems he had ever written.

Ted Hughes, whose early poems were fanged and blood-drenched investigations of our violent animal nature, took the monarchy as a serious mythical subject and was mocked for doing so. In one of his late efforts, he metamorphosed the Queen Mother into a tree, its roots spread beneath the English century. Opinion was split. Either Hughes had expressed the elemental mystery behind kingship or he'd been terribly rude about the complexion, age, immobility, and wooden demeanor of a universally loved near-centenarian.

You can't win. The Laureateship is a poisoned chalice, a base-metal crown more suitable to hack versifiers than to true Parnassians. Philip Larkin was offered it in 1984, but he turned it down—just one reason that no poet worth his or her salt would now accept it with unmixed feelings. At the Poetry International in London last weekend, serious top-rank poets gigglingly assured each other that they were "on the shortlist." But their diffidence didn't stop people all over the United Kingdom from talking about poetry. The papers put forward nominations as if the poets were contenders in a horse race: James Fenton, Geoffrey Hill, Tony Harrison, Douglas Dunn, John Fuller, Andrew Motion, Craig Raine, Simon Armitage. At present, the front-runners are Fenton, forty-nine, the Audenesque Professor of Poetry at Oxford, a librettist, and a former war correspondent; and Motion, forty-six, a mahogany-voiced and prolific poet, biographer (notably of Philip Larkin), and professor of creative writing who, in the view of many, virtually applied for the Laureate's job when he published a poem about Princess Diana in the *Times* on the day of her funeral.

Many people think it's time the post went to a woman, and are suggesting Wendy Cope, the Dorothy-Parkerish author of "Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis," and Carol Ann Duffy, the street-level surrealist. Black poets such as James Berry and the young Rastafarian Benjamin Zephaniah (the author

"You go on ahead. I want to watch the news."

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of "Dis Policeman Is Kicking Me to Death") are being commended with the same, slightly insulting P.C. tokenism.

Everybody has a nomination. Mo Mowlam, M.P., the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, suggested the former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney. Some critics wonder if Seamus Heaney might be eligible (he was born in Northern Ireland) or, failing that, the other bardic Nobel Prize winner, the St. Lucian epic poet Derek Walcott. Neither would be likely to take on the moth-eaten, and terribly British, mantle.

In Downing Street, Tony Blair is said to be ignoring more pressing matters of state and considering a referendum to choose the new Laureate, with votes cast via television or E-mail. The People's Poet—the last word in the democratization of culture.

Meanwhile, the nation's poets sit and wait for the call, and consider whether they should accept this strange phenomenon: a centuries-old, honorable Royal appointment that will make them a household name, lose them the respect of their peers, and probably guarantee that they'll never write a halfway-decent poem ever again.

—JOHN WALSH

RAG TRADE

Mario Testino's steamy evening.

MARIO TESTINO, "the world's hottest fashion photographer," according to proclaimers at the opening, last week, of his Mary Boone gallery exhibition, was literally steaming under a barrage of warmer and moister than usual air kisses. The white-walled gallery looked cool and elegant, but it seemed to be getting warmer by the second as guests advanced on Testinos priced from twenty-five hundred to five thousand dollars a pop. The opening reception was packed with fashion editors, a few models, and a mixture of young, cute, eye-contact-making, spiky-haired boys and not quite mirror copies of Kate Moss. A vague eroticism floated unrestrained over the bodies in the room.

Mario Testino

Testino is forty-four, a good-natured, fleshy, large-faced, loosely put-together six-plus-two-inch-footer, who was handsomely attired in a Bergere dark-green coat, a Charvet painterly-green shirt open at the collar, and black English brogues. He carried a couple of small Contax cameras and took photographs of his own photographs and of people looking at them. Sweating, and wiping his face with a damp handkerchief, he went from Testino to Testino offering comments. "I love being a voyeur," he said. "The whole life. The people. The clothes. The girls. The travel. I visit my mother at least twice a year in Peru. We are a close family. My brother is my business manager. I love my three sisters. I adore my mother.

"I am so lucky to do what I do," he went on, patting his face with the handkerchief and looking lovingly at a picture called "Roving Finger," which showed a forefinger curled into a woman's cleavage. He spoke in a mysteriously pleasing and undefinable accent, derived over time from his Peruvian birthplace, American schools, and London waiter jobs. "As a boy in Lima, when we visited museums I was always told, 'Do not touch,' so I wanted to touch. Now I touch."

On to "Carolyn Murphy, Georgina Grenville, Kylie Bax and Carla Bruni at Dior," all partly or completely nude in dressing quarters. Testino took a picture of his picture and said, "Very sexy, these girls. They are very young, about eighteen. I'm fascinated by youth. Young people have this big freedom with their bodies. I like to push them when they start. Then I drop them. There always have to be new ones. It's life. Life is about shedding certain things."

"Sheet Marks." On a man's chest, sheet marks indeed. "I'm fascinated by sheet marks," Testino said, dabbing sweat from his face. "I'm often the first one awake in a house full of people, and I see the sheet marks. It's a part of life."

"Extrovert," a shot, taken from behind, of a man in a Brazil hotel room exposing the better part of his buttocks. "Brazil is desperate for the perfect behind, perfect roundness—like sculpture," Testino explained, pinching and shaking the shoulders of his Bergere jacket for a breeze.

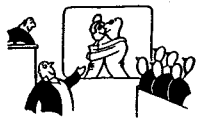
"He's the best, the sexiest of all the fashion photographers," one pretty young fashion editor said. "And he really loves his mother."

Another fashion editor, one with gray hair, and identified by Testino as "a legend," gave him a longer than usual air kiss and a big, knowing hug. "There's smoke coming out of the front door," she said to him with a loudly confident, born-to-the-old-New York guffaw. "You're so hot you're burning."

—LILLIAN ROSS

FULLER EXPLANATION DEPT.

An overlooked rationale for the Jefferson-Hemings connection.



IN last week's issue of the British scientific journal *Nature*, Eugene Foster, a professor emeritus of pathology at Tufts, wrote that, using a new DNA-testing technique, he had established an exact match of Y-chromosome markers between a male descendant of the family of Thomas Jefferson and a male descendant of Sally Hemings. This finding abruptly ended the two-hundred-year-old debate over whether the third President of the United States and his famously beautiful slave were lovers. To disbelieve now would require as much obtuseness as to believe, say, that a certain later President never came anywhere near a certain blue dress.

Of course, for a generation—beginning with the publication, in 1974, of Fawn Brodie's "Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History"—the circumstantial evidence has been piling up. Last year's "Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy," by Annette Gordon-Reed, made the case with extraordinary rigor; the book was the kind of carefully argued, thoroughly researched brief that sways juries. (Ms. Gordon-Reed, an African-American, is

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a professor of law.) But there remained a cadre of traditionalist historians who continued to insist, in the words of the late Dumas Malone, that it was "virtually inconceivable that this fastidious gentleman . . . could have carried on through a period of years a vulgar liaison which his own family could not have failed to detect."

One of the traditionalists' last-ditch arguments against the vulgar liaison was that the very idea of it was rendered absurd by Jefferson's oft-expressed disapproval of miscegenation. "The amalgamation of whites with blacks," Jefferson wrote in 1814, "produces a degradation to which no lover of his country, no lover of excellence in the human character, can innocently consent." In the days since *Nature's* bombshell, it has been taken for granted that Jefferson's time-bound (and, to modern ears, offensive) racial attitudes were, at the very least, inconsistent with what we now know to have been his actions. But a closer look at those attitudes suggests otherwise. In truth, Jefferson's view of the consequences of miscegenation varied according to direction, so to speak. A first-generation coupling, he thought, would be bad for the white but good for the black: "The improvement of the blacks in body and mind, in the first instance of their mixture with the whites, has been observed by every one," he wrote in "Notes on the State of Virginia," his only book. From that point on, everything depended on which way the next generation mated. If with a white, the offspring would be a quadroon, one-fourth black; and if that offspring, in turn, mated with a white, Jefferson noted in a kind of genetic chart he drew up in 1815, the resulting child, "having less than 1/4 of . . . pure negro blood, to wit 1/8 only, is no longer a mulatto, so that a third cross clears the blood."

Sally Hemings was a quadroon—she was the half sister of Jefferson's wife, Martha, who died in 1782. So Jefferson knew that any children Sally might give him would cross the magic threshold. Pondering all this in Paris in 1787, with Sally close at hand, he may well have felt that a heaven-sent obligation—and a highly agreeable one, at that—had descended upon him. Here was a chance to rectify, in part, the "degradation" of the family tree perpetrated by John Wayles, the slave-trading father of both Martha and Sally, and, in effect, to make it his personal project to guarantee that Sally's children would be rescued from "amalgamation."

Annette Gordon-Reed's book was not alone in addressing the Sally Hemings question in the run-up to the *Nature* article; Joseph Ellis's "American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson" appeared at the same time. But it was Ellis's book that won the National Book Award. And it was Ellis who dismissed the likelihood of the liaison as "remote," concluding, "Anyone who claims to have a clear answer to this most titillating question about the historical Jefferson is engaging in massive self-deception or outright lying." Ellis has now made a nimble switch to the other side. Indeed, he has become its most ubiquitous spokesman. Having learned in advance about the outcome of the DNA tests, he even managed to co-author a celebratory sidebar in the same issue of *Nature* that carried the report on them. But he hasn't had much to say about an astonishing claim he advanced in "American Sphinx": that Jefferson, from the time he became a widower, at the age of thirty-nine, "lacked the capacity for the direct and physical expression of his sexual energies. . . . Jefferson consummated his relations with women at a more rarefied level, where the palpable realities of physical intimacy were routinely sublimed to safer and more sentimental regions." In blunter words, Jefferson was impotent.

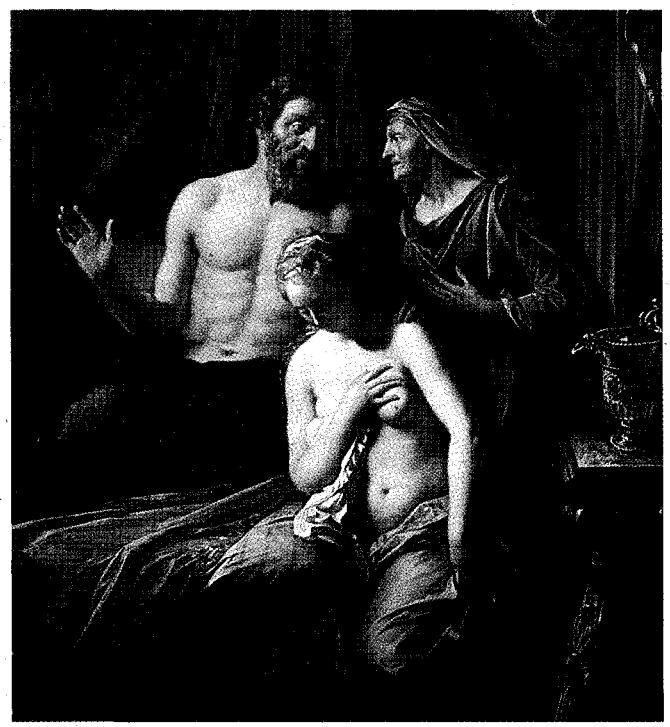

Figure 1

Ellis found support for this categorically stated but wholly conjectural claim in Jefferson's relationship with Maria Cosway, a beautiful and clever Anglo-Italian whom he met in 1786, when he was Minister to France. "The abiding character of their lengthy correspondence," Ellis wrote, "makes it abundantly clear that Jefferson preferred to meet his lovers in the rarefied region of his mind rather than the physical world of his bedchamber." Where Mrs. Cosway was concerned, perhaps so. But Hemings was a different story. A letter that Jefferson sent to Mrs. Cosway in April of 1788, after she returned to England and Sally Hemings had been in France a few months—a letter that Ellis does not mention—is interestingly suggestive. In it, Jefferson rapturously praises a painting by the Dutch artist Adriaen van der Werff (see Figure 1), which illustrates the story, in Genesis 16, of Sarah, the barren wife of Abraham, making a present to her husband of the beautiful slave girl Hagar. The painting is "delicious," Jefferson writes, adding friskily, "I would have agreed to have been Abraham, though the consequence would have been that I should have been dead five or six thousand years." It's hard to believe that Jefferson was unaware of the parallels to his own situation: a beautiful slave girl, whom his wife had bequeathed to him, was suddenly under his roof.

Jefferson was forty-five when the fifteen-year-old Sally Hemings settled in at his house on the Champs-Élysées. He was sixty-five when Eston Hemings Jefferson, whose paternity has now been definitively established, was born. Impotent? Apparently not.

—E. M. HALLIDAY

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Holiday Gift Guide

Holidays can invoke the pleasurable anticipation of festive family reunions and galas with friends, but for many they ignite the anxiety of that all too familiar gift-giving ritual. What to buy? Where to find it? What are the chances of being swept away by a frenzied crowd in the process? Why not stay out of the fray this year, and use our *Holiday Gift Guide* to choose something special for everyone on your list.

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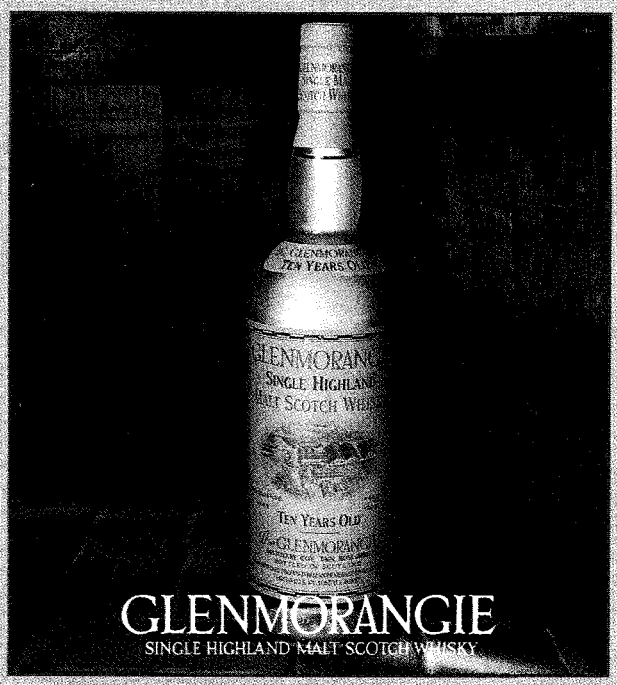

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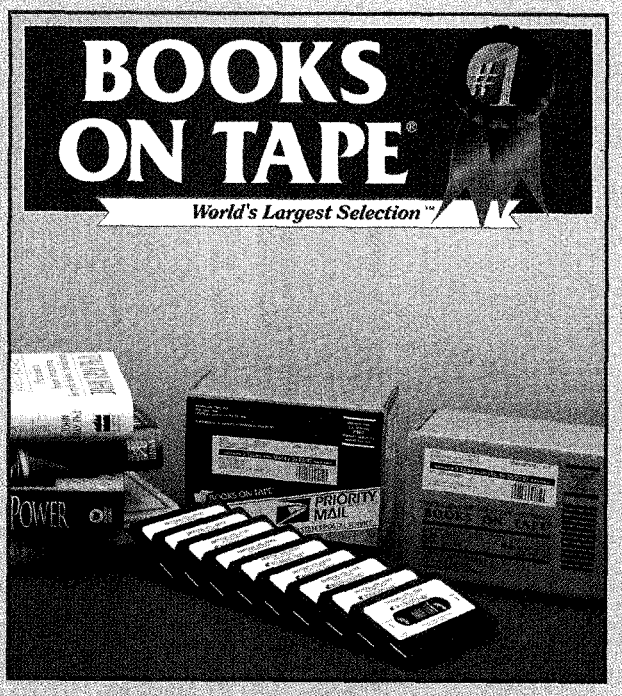

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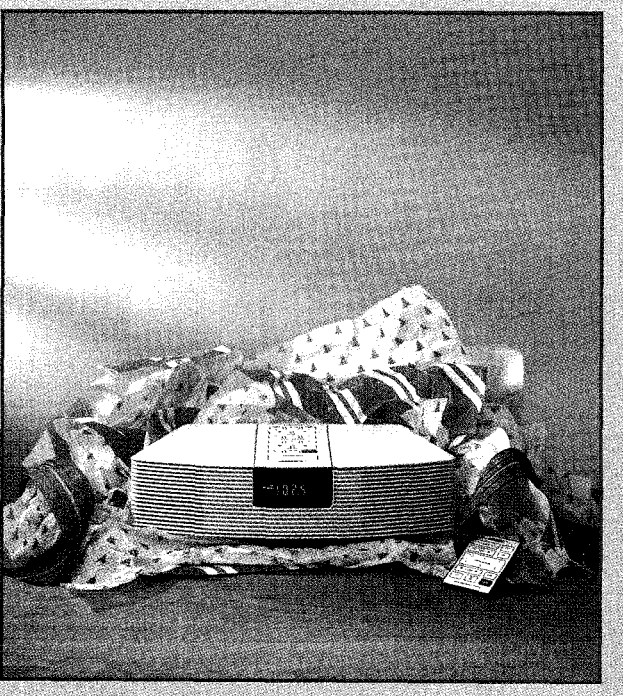

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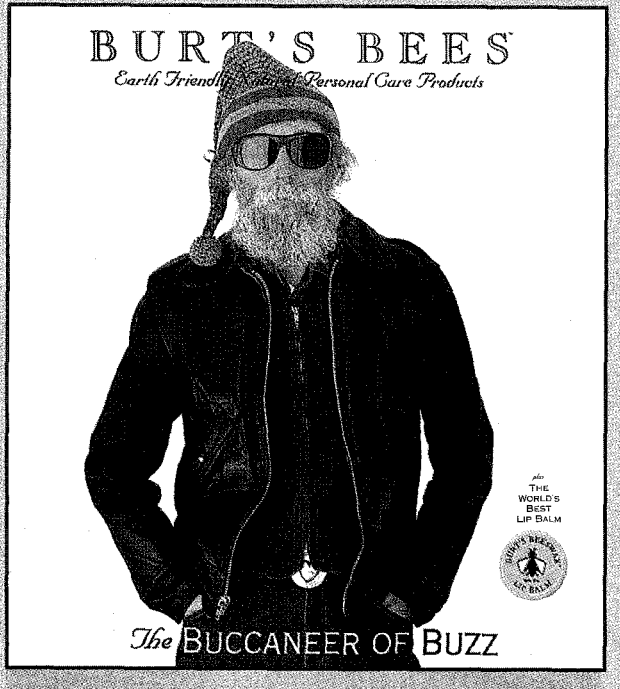

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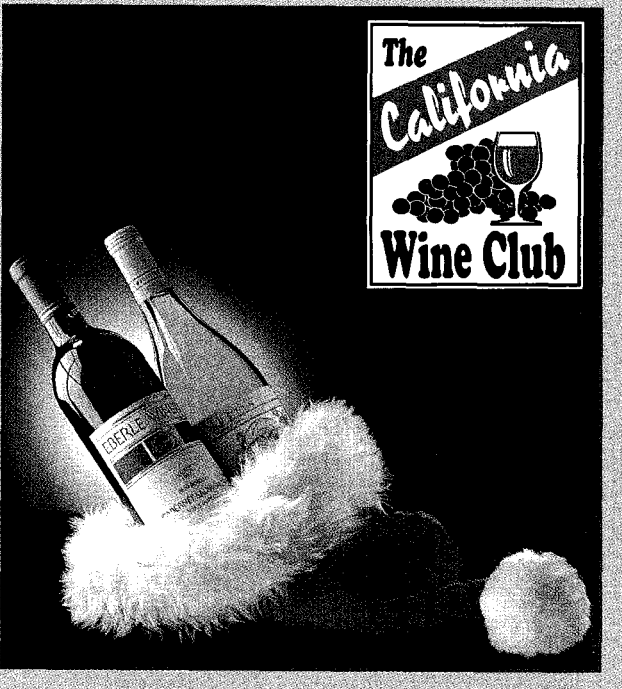

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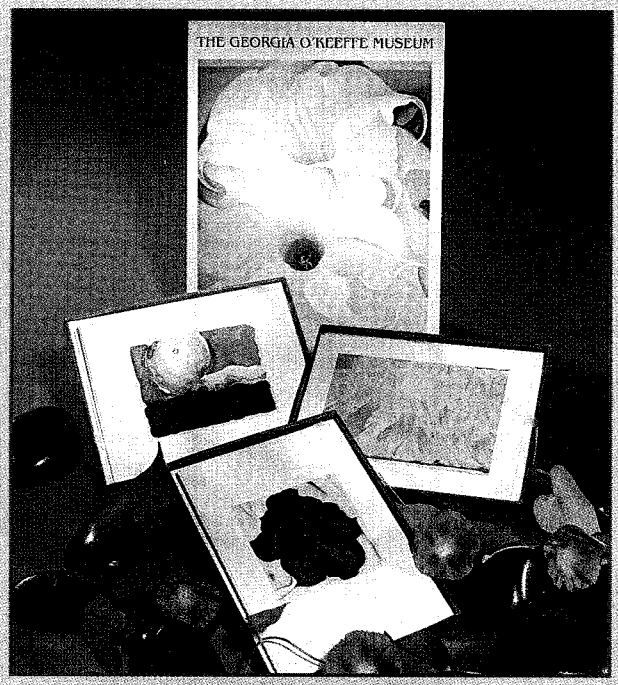

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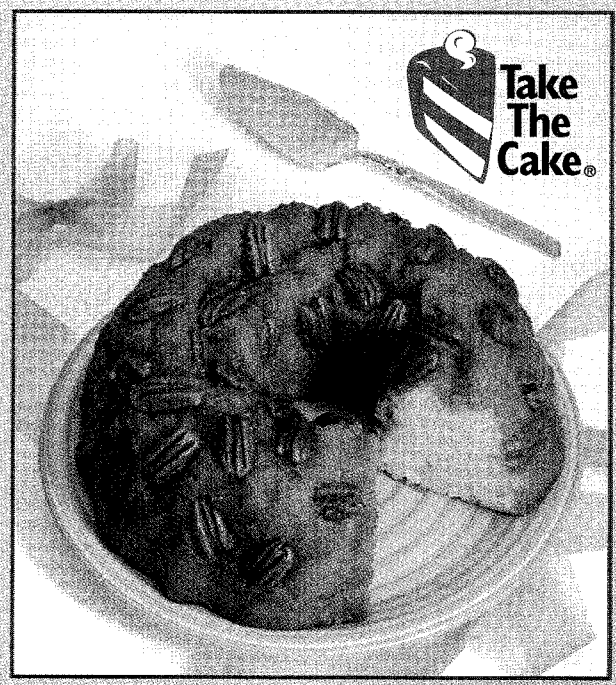

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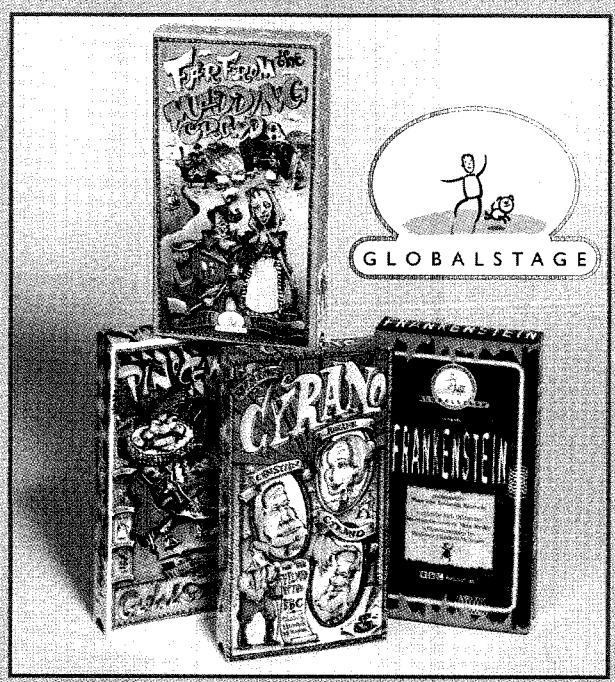

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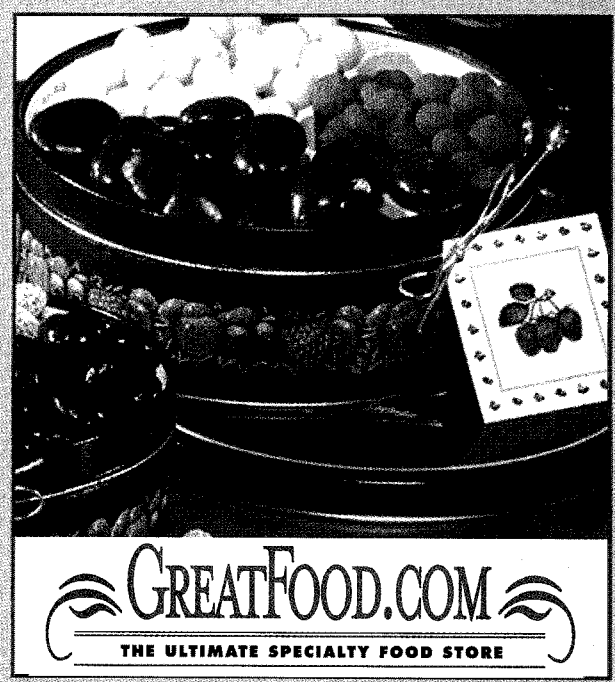

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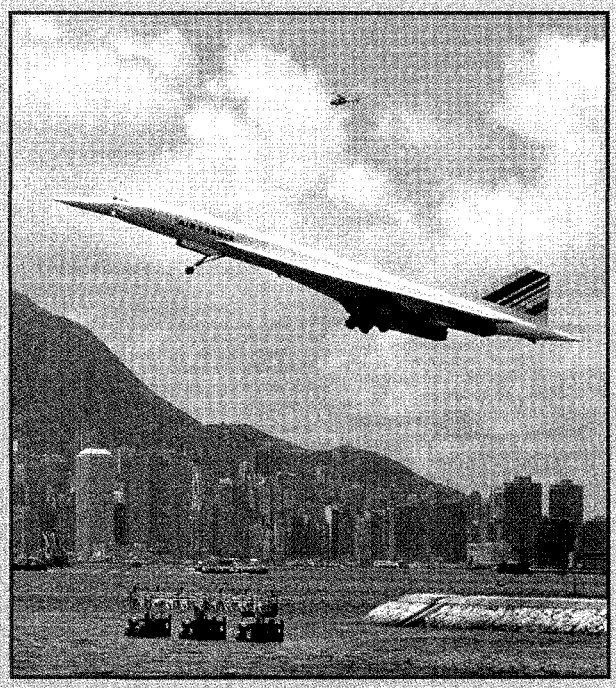

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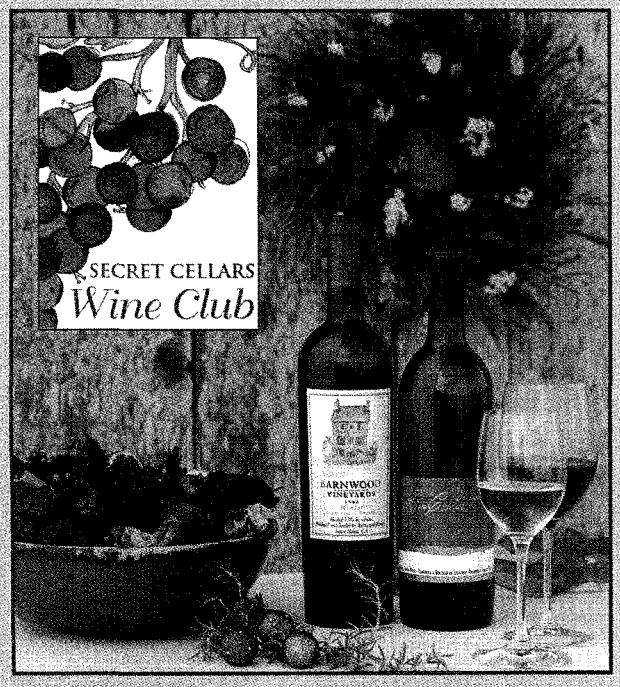

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ANNALS OF LAW

LOW CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS

Is Kenneth Starr really a rogue, or just part of a trend?

BY JEFFREY ROSEN

GARY BASEMAN

LAST week, just after the Republican election calamity but before Newt Gingrich's exhausted fall, Henry Hyde, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, indicated that he would probably call only one major witness during the impeachment hearings that are scheduled to begin on November 19th: Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater independent counsel. So what began as an investigation of the real-estate investments of an Arkansas governor may end as an inquest into the behavior of the investigator. Even before the Democratic Party's strong showing at the polls on November 3rd, Democrats had been preparing to put Starr at the center of the upcoming proceedings. They plan to pursue the question of whether he is a rogue prosecutor, who abused his office by, among other things, holding the threat of indictment over peripheral witnesses for trivial crimes. The Republicans intend to counter that Starr has behaved no differently from any other prosecutor, using rough tactics when necessary to prove his case. It's a familiar tale with a surprising twist: both sides are correct.

In one sense, it is absurd to say that Starr has behaved like an ordinary prosecutor: few citizens have been investigated, let alone indicted, for the kinds of offenses he identifies in his referral. But Starr's defenders are right to note that prosecutors do threaten, wire, and flip witnesses, in murder and racketeering investigations. In recent years, moreover, they have begun to use these techniques in less serious cases. Starr's tactics are typical of a trend in criminal-law enforcement which might be called the super-Capone strategy. In the nineteen-twenties, federal authorities believed that Al Capone, the Chicago mobster, was responsible for a pattern of murders, kidnappings, and extortion schemes. When those crimes were difficult to prove, prosecutors indicted him for federal-tax evasion, and they won a conviction in 1931 on that lesser charge.

But tax evasion is a serious crime in its own right, and prosecutors were certain that Capone was guilty of far worse. In the nineteen-nineties version of the Capone strategy, witnesses, as well as suspects, are threatened with charges involving minor offenses for which ordinary citizens are rarely punished—call them low crimes and misdemeanors. President Clinton, who is now a target of the super-Capone approach, has in the past been one of its enthusiastic supporters. But, to judge by election results, the public is ambivalent about this trend, and, during oral arguments before the Supreme Court early this month—in Knowles v. Iowa, a case involving an Iowa man who was stopped for speeding and subsequently convicted of drug possession—the Justices seemed to be having second thoughts about the tactical use of low crimes and misdemeanors as well.

Democrats on the Judiciary Committee have been looking into whether

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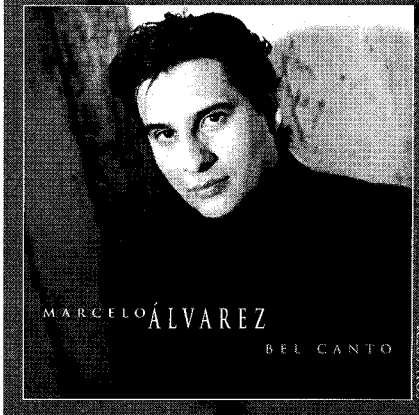

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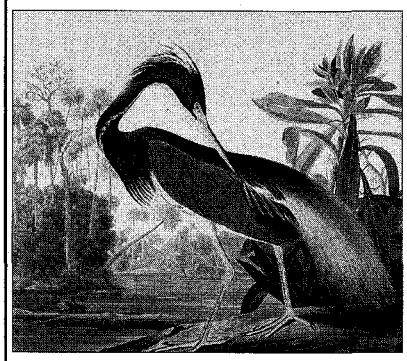

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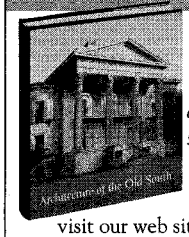

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Starr used a low-crimes strategy to threaten and intimidate witnesses," many of them female. One of the architects of this inquiry is Lis Wiehl, the principal deputy chief investigative counsel for the Democrats, who teaches at the University of Washington School of Law. She has been examining the prosecutors' dealings not only with Monica Lewinsky but also with her mother, her aunt (who accepted an immunity deal of her own out of fear of prosecution), and her college friends. In addition, Wiehl is looking into allegations that Starr's staff tried to cow a woman in Arkansas who had had only incidental connection to the Whitewater transactions. "It's a lot of women, and I found that really offensive," Wiehl told me.

One of these women, Julie Hiatt Steele, had initially confirmed aspects of her former friend Kathleen Willey's claim that the President had made an unwanted sexual advance to Willey, but later said that Willey had asked her to lie. Steele's lawyer told the *Times* that, in an effort to put pressure on Steele, Starr's investigators have been looking into whether Steele's adoption of a Romanian orphan, in 1990, was illegal under United States law. Steele adamantly denies the suggestion, noting that she took the precaution of adopting her son in Romania *and* Virginia. But if a prosecutor were inclined to troll for technical violations of inscrutable laws, it's hard to imagine a more promising area than Romanian adoptions.

House Democrats may also look at Starr's treatment of Monica Lewinsky's mother, Marcia Lewis, who broke down and was escorted from the jury room, exclaiming, "I can't take it, I can't take any more, I can't stand it!" after prosecutors tried to get her to confess that she had urged Lewinsky to withhold evidence in the Paula Jones case. The strategy was clear enough: if Lewis were to confess to obstructing justice in the Jones case, the prosecutors could then increase the pressure on Lewinsky, offering immunity to both mother and daughter in exchange for the daughter's testimony. Lewis, however, refused to let Michael Emmick, one of Starr's deputies, put words in her mouth. "I can't answer so many times the same question," Lewis protested at the end of her second day of interrogation, which lasted five and a half hours, and during which she continued to insist that she hadn't interfered with the Jones case. "I feel as if you're trying to—trying to make me answer something. I think I answered this."

"The record will speak for itself about whether or not you've answered that, Ma'am," Emmick retorted. The grilling was out of proportion to the topic at hand—what a mother knew about her daughter's affair—yet by staging this bit of courtroom drama, the prosecutors hoped to convince Lewinsky, and also the grand jurors, that Marcia Lewis was in grave legal peril.

Michael Emmick was one of the five attorneys from Starr's office who interrogated Lewinsky at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel after she had been accosted by F.B.I. agents at the nearby Pentagon City Mall, where she had been invited to lunch by Linda Tripp. When the grand jurors asked to hear about those encounters, Emmick tried to change the subject. But the jurors insisted: "We really want to know about that day," one said. Soon afterward, Lewinsky began to cry and asked Emmick to leave the room. She then described how Starr's investigators had told her that, if she insisted on calling her lawyer, Starr would withdraw his offer of immunity from prosecution for perjury, obstruction of justice, witness tampering, and subornation of perjury. The investigators understood that if Lewinsky *had* called her lawyer, Frank Carter, he could have immediately filed a motion withdrawing Lewinsky's affidavit in the Jones case, which had been mailed only that day and wouldn't be received at the courthouse in Little Rock for another three days. And, if the affidavit had been withdrawn, then the case against Lewinsky would have been substantially weaker.

THE techniques used by Starr's prosecutors look uncomfortably like legalized blackmail. There's a whiff of blackmail, of course, surrounding every plea bargain. A panel of the

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Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, in Denver, recently found that a prosecutor's offer of a reduced sentence in exchange for a witness's coöperation violated the federal bribery statute. (The decision will be reconsidered by the full court this month, and may well be overturned.) Nevertheless, what leads us to tolerate plea bargaining under ordinary circumstances is the notion that both criminals and the state are better off: the state avoids the expense and unpredictability of a trial, and the criminal gets a lighter sentence. On the other hand, when prosecutors coerce the coöperation of innocent people by threatening them with indictments for technical violations of laws that are almost never enforced, it's harder to claim plausibly that the targets of these tactics are getting what they deserve.

Still, Kenneth Starr is scarcely alone in using this form of prosecutorial pressure. Even as Clinton's lawyers were denouncing Starr for mistreating Monica Lewinsky, Attorney General Janet Reno called Capitol Hill to lobby against a bill that would require federal prosecutors to abide by state ethics guidelines, which generally prohibit the interrogation of a suspect who has retained a lawyer, outside his lawyer's presence. (Sounding a favorite Republican theme, Reno insisted that the measure would violate federalism.) The bill had been introduced by two congressmen from Pennsylvania, John Murtha, a Democrat, and Joseph McDade, a grandfatherly Republican, whose career is a vivid testament to the principle that, if a conservative is a liberal who has been mugged, a liberal is a conservative who has been indicted. McDade was hounded for years by federal prosecutors, who alleged, among other things, that he had improperly solicited private donations to help finance the PBS broadcast of a Fourth of July concert on the Mall. "I

"Have you got any cash on you?"

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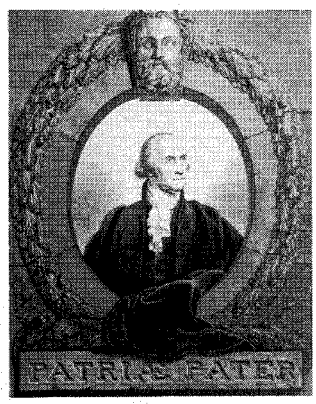

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to purify your shyness, not free you from it;
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without appearing to, your hushed voice lagging
with a furtive clumsiness behind the singer's,
each syllable only half formed on your lips
before the next one and the next arrived;
the way you happily seemed to falter after
what was always half a syllable beyond—
was not the least accomplished of your many
unknowingly disclosed when most disguised
most accidental flashings of a presence
that's not for yours but other people's eyes.

—ALAN SHAPIRO

had an indictment that was forty-three pages long," he told me. The investigation, which lasted four years, cost him the chairmanship of the House Appropriations Committee. Finally, in 1996, a federal jury acquitted him on all counts.

McDade is one of the few Republicans who will publicly criticize Ken Starr's treatment of Monica Lewinsky. "That young lady, asking to call her lawyer—I thought that was eminently her right under our Constitution," he told me. "Instead of that, she was threatened with twenty-seven years in jail. It was very close to being bludgeoned." During the debate over his bill, McDade proposed a kind of Ten Commandments of prosecutorial conduct, most of which would apply to the Starr investigation. (Sixth Commandment: A prosecutor must not "attempt to influence or color a witness's testimony." Ninth Commandment: A prosecutor should not "leak or otherwise improperly disseminate information to any person during an investigation.") None of these commandments passed, although McDade did manage to insert the amendment about interrogating witnesses into the omnibus spending bill that was signed into law at the end of October.

McDade's amendment is unlikely to make much of a difference, however, because it addresses only a small part of the broader problem of expanding prosecutorial power. Every time the Clinton Administration has sought to score a political point by federalizing some new offense, such as carrying a gun to school, the discretion of federal prosecutors has been increased. While state and local prosecutors labor under limited budgets and crushing caseloads, some of their federal counterparts, particularly the independent counsels, have the money and the time to choose their cases and pursue them relentlessly. In the process, innocent people may be threatened with trivial charges if prosecutors believe that they can help trap the bigger target. "Criminal law now covers real crimes and basically fake crimes, which are the equivalent of wild cards in a poker game that the government is allowed to play to get people for other reasons," William Stuntz, who teaches law at the University of Virginia, says.

To make sure that they are holding as many cards as possible, local law-enforcement officials have also pressed state legislatures to increase the penalties for minor violations, such as a broken taillight, which the police can then use in an effective crime-fighting strategy of zero tolerance. The former New York police commissioner William Bratton was among the first to institute a policy of detaining people for petty crimes like turnstile jumping,

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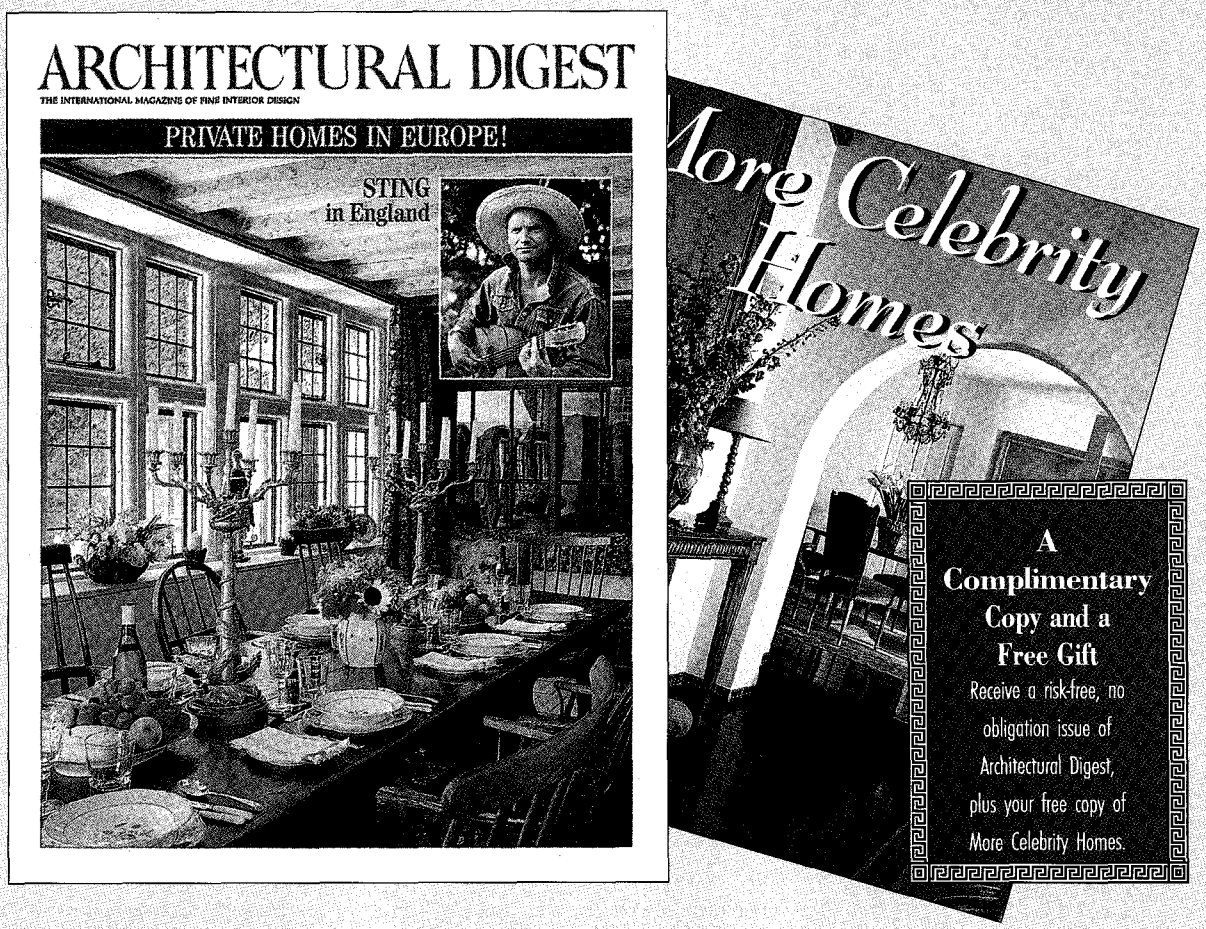

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• •

and then searching them and running a warrant check. In the process, many turnstile jumpers were found to be wanted for more serious offenses. A few civil libertarians objected, but crime fell so convincingly after the zero-tolerance concept was inaugurated that the public enthusiastically endorsed the approach.

During the past few decades, the Burger and Rehnquist Courts have overseen a steady dismantling of constitutional restraints on police and prosecutors, and this evolution has made the zero-tolerance approach possible. During the nineteen-sixties, the Warren Court was widely believed to have hamstrung law enforcement by its insistence that searches and seizures were presumptively unconstitutional unless they were accompanied by a judicial warrant and probable cause. So, during the seventies and eighties, the Court expanded an important exception, called "the search incident to arrest." When a suspect was taken into custody, the Court held, it was perfectly reasonable for police officers to search the area around him in order to protect themselves and to prevent the destruction of evidence. But this created an incentive for the police to arrest a suspect on any pretext—such as not wearing a seat belt—so that they could conduct a search of his car without a warrant. It also created an incentive for states to authorize arrests for increasingly minor offenses—from jaywalking to letting a dog off the leash—in order to give the police more leeway to investigate real crimes.

In Iowa, the legislature went even further, authorizing the police to conduct a "citation" search whenever they stopped someone for a traffic infraction. Under ordinary circumstances, a police officer would not arrest someone for speeding. But the mere fact that the officer *could* arrest the speeder, the legislature reasoned, was sufficient grounds for performing a search incident to arrest. In 1996, a man named Patrick Knowles was stopped for speeding in Iowa. The police officer wrote a ticket and then combed through the man's car, even though he didn't have probable cause to suspect that Knowles was guilty of anything more serious than a traffic violation. He found marijuana under the driver's seat, and Knowles

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was later convicted of drug possession. Knowles challenged the constitutionality of the Iowa law, and on Election Day the Supreme Court heard arguments on the matter.

In their questions to the lawyers in the Knowles case, the Justices seemed concerned that prosecutorial discretion had grown so broad that it threatened to dismantle the Fourth Amendment's prohibition of unreasonable searches and seizures. If the police were given the power to search you anytime you committed a misdemeanor, Justice Antonin Scalia asked, did that mean "you could be strip-searched for jaywalking?"

What unsettled the Justices about the Knowles case is similar to what seems to unsettle many people about the Lewinsky investigation: investigative techniques that seem perfectly reasonable when they're applied to murderers or Mafia dons may be unreasonable when they're applied to speeders, jaywalkers, or twenty-five-year-old seductresses. It's ironic, William Stuntz observes, that when the detective Philip Vannatter vaulted the wall surrounding O. J. Simpson's house without a warrant the search was probably illegal, even though it was almost certainly reasonable, whereas Kenneth Starr's treatment of Julie Steele and Marcia Lewis is clearly legal, even though it appears to be far more unreasonable. High crimes justify a high level of prosecutorial zeal; low crimes may not—particularly because, with enough time and effort, just about anyone can be nailed for a misdemeanor. Although this distinction has eluded the Clinton Administration on several occasions, it seems to have resonated with the Court and the public, and it may save Clinton's Presidency. ♦

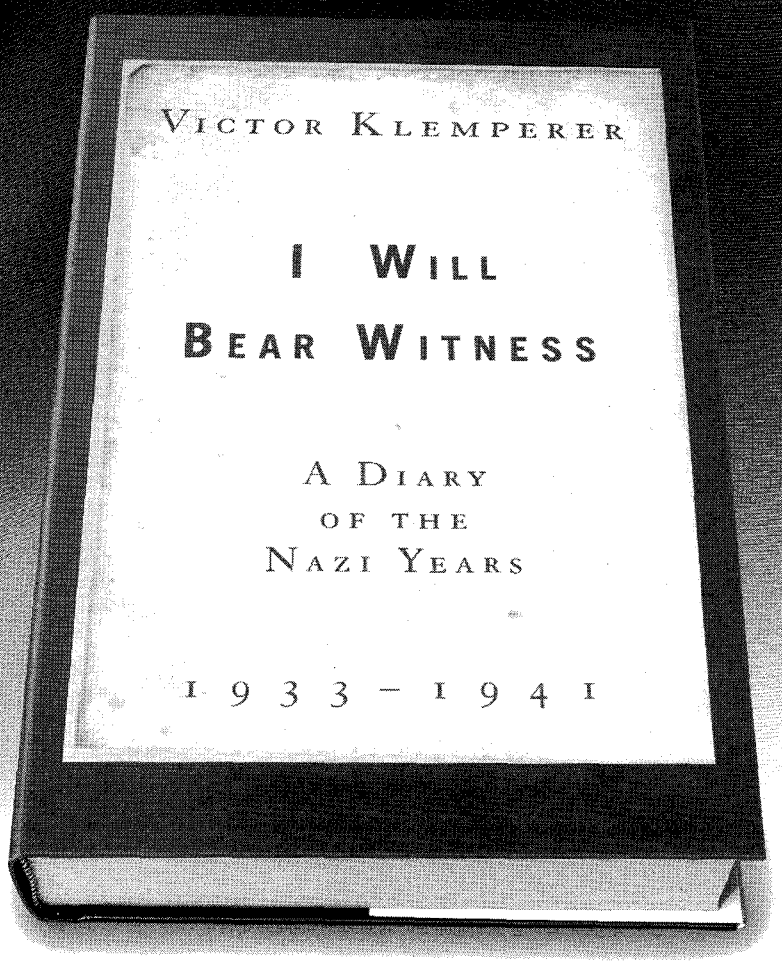
THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAND

[*From the Guardian*]

IN AN OBITUARY headed, Scouting in the blood, Page 20, yesterday, we confused woggle and toggle. Dr John Wilkinson, the subject of the obituary, introduced the woggle to Albania, not the toggle. The toggle [*Concise Oxford Dictionary*] is "a device for fastening (esp. a garment), consisting of a cross-piece which can pass through a hole or loop in one position but not in another"—as in duffle-coat, "a hooded overcoat of duffle, usu fastened with toggles". A woggle is "a leather etc ring through which the ends of a Scout's neckerchief are passed at the neck".

"I CONTINUE TO WRITE. THIS IS MY HEROICS. I WANT TO BEAR WITNESS, PRECISE WITNESS, UNTIL THE VERY END."

—Victor Klemperer, writing in Dresden, Germany, 1941



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SHOUTS & MURMURS

EMILY DICKINSON, JERK OF AMHERST

BY ANDY BOROWITZ

It was with great reluctance that I decided to write about my thirty-year friendship with Emily Dickinson. To many who would read my book, Miss Dickinson was a cherished literary icon, and any attempt to describe her in human terms would, understandably, be resented. And yet by not writing this book I would be depriving her most ardent admirers of meeting the Emily Dickinson I was privileged to know: more than a mentor, she was my anchor, my compass, my lighthouse.

Except when she was drunk. At those times, usually beginning at the stroke of noon, she became a gluttonous, vituperative harpy who would cut you for your last Buffalo wing. Once she got hold of her favorite beverage, Olde English malt liquor, the "belle of Amherst" would, as she liked to put it, "get polluted 'til [she] booted." This Emily Dickinson would think nothing of spitting chewing tobacco in a protégé's face, blithely explaining that she was "working on [her] aim."

Who, then, was the real Emily Dickinson? Daughter of New England in chaste service to her poetry, or backstabbing gorgon who doctored your bowling score when you went to get more nachos? By exploring this question, I decided, I had a chance not only to learn about Miss Dickinson but also to learn about myself, and to learn even more about myself if the book went into paperback.

When I first met Miss Dickinson, I was a literary greenhorn with a handful of unfinished poems, struggling to find my voice and something that rhymed with "Nantucket." Believing that she would be more likely to take me under her wing if I appeared to be an ingénue, I entered her lace-curtained parlor in Amherst dressed as a Cub Scout. But she took no note of my attire as she read over that day's work: "Parting is all we know of heaven, /And all we need of hell." Putting down her quill, she brushed the bonnet-crowned curls from her forehead. "Well, it beats stealing cars!" she croaked in a husky baritone.

Declaring that "quittin' time is spittin' time," she reached into her sewing box for a pouch of her favorite "chaw," as she called it, and pulled a "tall and foamy" out of the icebox. She generously agreed to look over my poems, pork rinds spilling from her mouth as she read. Finally, she anointed my efforts with words of encouragement that would sustain me throughout my early career: "You're a poet and you don't know it. Your feet show it. They're long fellows. Now I gotta hit the head."

Years passed before I saw another, less merry, aspect of Miss Dickinson's character, at a book party for Ralph Waldo Emerson. Miss Dickinson was experiencing a trough in her career; she had been reduced to writing advertising copy, most notably, "Nothing is better for thee/Than me," for Quaker Oats. At the party, Miss Dickinson sat alone at the bar, doing tequila shooters and riffing moribund, angry couplets that often did not scan. I sensed that it was time to take her home.

In the parking lot, she stopped abruptly near Emerson's car. "Let's key it," she said, her eyes dancing maniacally. I assumed that this was just "Emily being Emily," and tried to laugh it off. "Don't be such a wuss," she said, scratching "Waldo sucks" into the passenger door. I gently upbraided Miss Dickinson for her actions, which only served to inflame her: "Emerson's trying to steal my juice, baby. It took me years to get where I am, understand what I'm saying? I used to run three-card monte on the streets of Newton. And I ain't goin' back!" At this moment, I found myself confronted with a possibility that I had never wanted to consider in all our years of friendship: Emily Dickinson was a real jerk.

Some years later, Boston University asked me to moderate a panel including Miss Dickinson, William Dean Howells, and the author, long since forgotten, of the verse "Finders, keepers / Losers, weepers." I was by this time a successful poet in my own right, having become renowned for my series of "Happiness Is . . ." gift books and pillows. Seated next to Miss Dickinson, I attempted to mend the breach that had developed in our relationship; I went on at some length about my debt to her work. She took a sip of water, cleared her throat, and replied, "Bite me, you self-aggrandizing weasel."

The last time I saw Emily Dickinson, she said she didn't have time to speak, as she was on her way to the greyhound races in Taunton. But I could not let her go without asking what had happened to our friendship. Her eyes downcast, she said, simply, "You've got ketchup on your tie." Quizzically, I lowered my head and took a right uppercut to the jaw. As I crumpled to the pavement, Miss Dickinson unleashed a profane tirade, along with a pistol-whipping that was startling for both its vigor and its efficiency.

As I review this last memory, it occurs to me that some readers might conclude that I am trying to cast Emily Dickinson in a negative light. Nothing could be further from my intentions. In fact, when I regained consciousness I realized that Miss Dickinson, in her tirade, had given me a final, precious gift. True, I no longer had my wallet, but I had, at long last, a separate identity, a voice. And, perhaps most valuable of all, a rhyme for "Nantucket." ♦

GARY HOVLAND

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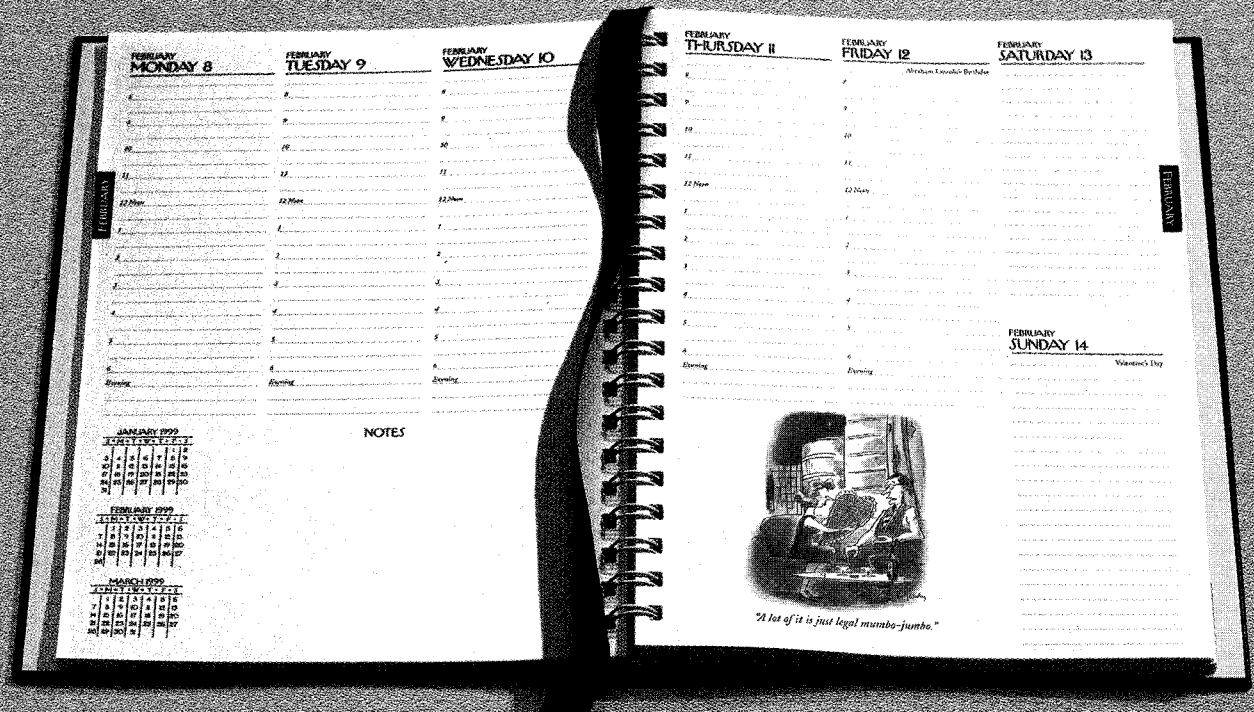

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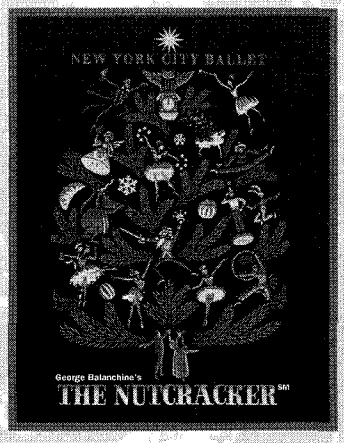

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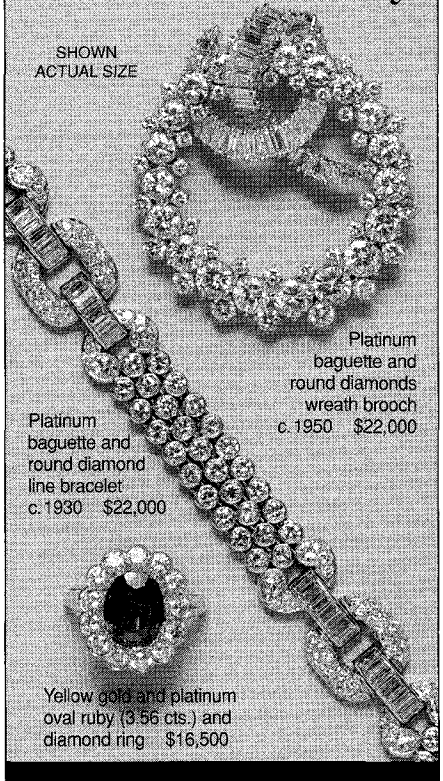

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THE SPORTING SCENE

BANG-UP SUMMER

Never mind history: this was the season when Big Mac and the Yankees brought the fun back to baseball.

BY ROGER ANGELL

IMAGE is all, but sometimes it's nice to have a little variety. This summer, on days when one could scarcely avoid the sight or thought of Monica Lewinsky in thick lipstick hurriedly climbing out of a black car, or of Kenneth Starr, documents and coffee mug in hand, going off to work, one could generally count on something better by bedtime: Mark McGwire, with his massive, gauntleted arms once again opening eloquently after his swing and the bat dropping from his left hand and his gaze tilted upward toward the rising and departing ball; or Sammy Sosa, in the selfsame act, going airborne across home plate, with his feet together and his arms excitedly flinging themselves into the "Yay!" configuration. Thanks, guys. Later in the summer, we could also click off, night after night, to the reassuring vision of Joe Torre, the Yankee manager, again laying down his water bottle and his sepulchral game face and starting up the dugout steps to shake hands with his troupe of winners.

Thank you, baseball.

It was a summer like no other—a splendid run of luck and accomplishment for the grand old apparatus, when the sport appeared to regain not only a good part of the reputation that the union and the owners had squandered and trampled during the 1994 strike but also a time when the pleasures of the game seemed to involve the players and the fans in equal measure. The fun was back. Two great stories preoccupied us—the first of them almost a movie, although the script outline would never have made it past the first conference. Check it out:

Big, lunky, red-headed millennial slugger (he's divorced, he's a dad, he's had therapy) goes bombs-away through whole summer (great crowd stuff: home-inked banners, fan cameras flashing all over the park w. each swing, yells, tears, fireworks smoke across infield), breaks hallowed, dispute-marred Maris home-run mark, keeps on trucking, ends with seventy (magic-time numero akin to the Bambino's old sixty) on season's last day after rapping eight—no, get a grip: five—dingers in final three games. Add plot interest: rival slugger w. different swing & style plays for America's sweetheart Cubs in ivied ballyard, comes on strong, ties our hero, goes ahead, falls back, loses (give him, say, sixty-six) but w. class. Make him ethnic: Native American? Israeli? No, hold it: he's Latino. Dominican, what else: new home of nat'l pastime almost. Great guy, heartbreaker, airmails kisses to his mom after each blast. In touch w. his feelings. He & Big Mac meet at Wrigley pre-game mid-Aug. at time when pressured white-bread hero sick of media swarm, getting down, thinking Prozac. They hug & Sammy w. smile reminds him it's about fun, man. Great pal closeups. Yesss. Our man lightens up, goes on whacking, wins. Major marketing ops: family values, tolerance, op-ed synchronicity etc. plus high-end seven-fig. gear & memorabilia sales. Let's take a meeting.

WHAT made the story—we're back in baseball time—wasn't just the number but the dimensions of McGwire's pokes: those shocking, nervous-laughter-inspiring shots deep into the middle tiers or up beyond the fan banners and into the upper decks. Only twenty-three of McGwire's seventy blasts were measured at less than four hundred feet, and five of them sailed over five: Mac's homers, as his manager, Tony La Russa, pointed out, actually created a new baseball category, consistent distance, with the average measuring around four hundred and twenty feet. La Russa also kept telling reporters that McGwire's concentration was what he admired above all. "The way he keeps coming through, it's beyond description," he said. "You check him out and

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Baggy and belligerent, the Yankees' David Wells was a circus act out on the mound—but not to the batters.

DAVID LEVINE

you see the power that's emanating from his mind. I can see it rippling." Whether in search of brains or bombs, crushing assemblages of fans turned out wherever Mac went, with many of them arriving two or three hours early to watch him in batting practice. They became crazily selective, cheering for their home team's guys, as usual, but also for each McGwire at-bat, and booed pitchers of their own who dared hand him a base on balls. Cheering erupted in other parks around the leagues as well, whenever it was announced that he had parked another. He had become a festival.

Sosa, for his part, kept on happening. He was there in St. Louis, eerily present, on the night of September 8th, when McGwire delivered—sorry, no "closure" today—the payoff sixty-second home run, which did away with the ancient mark, and the two shared an affectionate embrace and double stomach punches. It took almost a week for Sammy to hit his sixty-second, but he wasn't quite done. His total of a hundred and fifty-eight runs batted in, by the way, was the highest total in the majors in forty-nine years. His round-trippers, moreover, had more weight than McGwire's, because his Cubs, unlike Mac's hapless Cardinals, were in a race for the National League wild-card spot. Watching him on the tube, you weren't always tempted to go away and do something else until it was time for his next at-bat.

Though the record books won't show it, Sosa was the first man in baseball history to hit sixty-six home runs in a single season: a record he held for forty-six minutes. Mac tied it the same night—he was in St. Louis, Sammy in Houston—and then bopped a pair of home runs in each of his last two games of the year. No one appreciated this final flurry and the glittering total more than he did. "I can't believe I did it," he said. "It's absolutely amazing. I'm in awe of myself right now."

THE Yankee story wasn't exactly a star vehicle, but it had legs. After some bumbling in the first week of the season, the club jumped away from its rivals in devastating fashion—the Yanks

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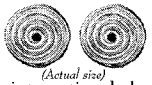

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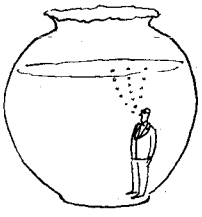
went fourteen and one in one stretch of April and May, and twenty and four a bit later; they won or split twenty-four series in a row. "You shoot against par," manager Joe Torre said, citing Bobby Jones. There were delectable or startling moments along the way, including David Wells's perfect game against the Twins on the sold-out Beanie Baby Day at the Stadium; that fallen chunk of masonry in the left-field loges, which closed the old park for eleven days and encouraged George Steinbrenner and Mayor Giuliani into opportunistic posturings in favor of a replacement stadium in mid-Manhattan; the arrival of Orlando Hernandez by raft from Cuba, and El Duque's getting his first major-league start after David Cone's mother's Jack Russell terrier bit him on the forefinger of his pitching hand. But it was the winning that became the story in the end. The Yankees' final team statistics were elegant and disarming; playing them was like getting run over by a B.M.W. No Yankee batter hit as many as thirty homers, but together they hit two hundred and seven of them. Only one Yankee pitcher finished with twenty victories (Cone, at 20–7), but five others had ten wins or better. Without fuss or squabbles, without an identifiable leader or superstar, the Yankees won so often and in so many ways—with their starting pitching and finishing pitching; with defense, quickness, opportunism, and sock—that they suddenly felt historic.

The story held up. Suppressing their league opposition (they finished twenty-two games ahead of the next-best American League club, the Red Sox) and then flattening their post-season opponents (they won eleven of thirteen games, including a sweep of the San Diego Padres in the World Series), the Yankees won their twenty-fourth championship, their second ticker-tape parade in three years, and an assured place in late-night baseball debating. I don't know exactly where these 1998 Yankees come out when compared to the standard all-timers—the 1927 Murderers' Row; the 1961 Mantle-Maris Bronx Bombers; the green-clad Oakland Athletics, who won three consecutive championships in the early seventies; and Cincinnati's Big Red Machine in the middle of that same decade—but I notice that such arguments are never conclusive and in the end seem only to diminish the flavors and accomplishments of these sublime clubs. In any case, the Yanks' hundred and fourteen regular-season victories are second only to the hundred and sixteen of the spitball-era 1906 Chicago Cubs, and their over-all hundred and twenty-five wins and fifty losses, or .714, trails the .722 of the 1927 Ruth-Meusel-Combs Yanks, the .747 of those same Cubs (who actually lost the Series that year to the White Sox), and the .717 of the 1909 Pirates. Measuring our Yankees with the everyday yardstick that players and managers use, they wound up seventy-five games above .500. Unheard-of is good enough for me.

I don't think the history questions will go away. Through August and early September, I kept running into friends who eagerly wanted to be told—as if I knew—whether McGwire was going to break the Maris home-run record and whether the Yankees were the greatest team of all time. They couldn't wait for the sluggers and the games to produce the answers; it was as if *they* wanted to be certified. Joe Torre fended off this line of questioning almost every day. "We try not to measure up to anybody," he said. What mattered to him was winning that day's game and—he confessed near the end—finishing ahead of the 1927 Yanks in the win column, which he did. If he had needed more, it finally came to me—if he had wanted his team further embronzed or acclaimed—that would only make problems for next year's Yankees and diminish our appetite for next year's baseball. I have already heard some advance worrying among the baseball brass about a fall-off in enthusiasm for the pastime in the new season, but perhaps someone will think to order an extra Roman candle or two for the Hall of Fame inductions, come July, when the entering class will include George Brett, Nolan Ryan, Robin Yount, and Carlton Fisk.



THERE were scraps of baseball news elsewhere. Early in May, twenty-year-old Kerry Wood, a rookie right-hander with the Cubs, tied a rare major-league mark when he struck out twenty

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batters in a game against the Astros; next time out, he fanned thirteen more. More often, the summer's celebrities turned out to be codgers. Rickey Henderson, for instance, who stole sixty-six bases, to lead all comers for the twelfth time, and run his unmatched lifetime total to 1,297; he'll be back next year, at the age of, oh, sixty. Roger Clemens, who is thirty-six, went unbeaten in his last twenty-two starts for the Blue Jays, and ended his fifteenth year in the majors with twenty wins, the league's best earned-run average (2.65), and the most strikeouts (two hundred and seventy-one). Cal Ripken is thirty-eight, but his longevity on the field connects him in our minds to an earlier baseball era; he has become the Justice Holmes of the pastime. Cal's decision on September 20th to take a day off ended his great streak at 2,632 consecutive games played—a run that began in May of 1982 and took him five hundred and two games above the once unreachable Gehrig plateau. The moment he sat down, all those rumors that his insistent presence in the lineup had grown burdensome to his club, the Orioles, and the murmurings that his performance was declining were blown away. His feat became brighter because he had closed it out on his own terms. He will play on, at times of his choosing, for a year or two more, I expect, basking in the full sunshine of our regard. I can remember a day early in Ripken's career when his manager, Earl Weaver, first began talking about moving him from third base, where he'd been playing, to shortstop. He gave six or seven reasons for it, as was his custom for anything he did, and then he said, "Oh, well, wherever you pencil him in, you know he's going to be there every day for the next fifteen years." Not bad, Earl.

Dennis Eckersley, a different kind of model, stepped down last month (I *think* he stepped down) not long after his thousand-and-seventy-first turn on the mound: a fresh mark for game appearances by a pitcher. Arriving in 1975, he was a fiery and successful starter for the Indians and then for the Red Sox, but found his true niche after the Athletics converted him into their bullpen stopper a decade ago. His fifty-one saves won him a Cy Young Award in 1992, but, what with his Scaramouche mustache, his gliding movements, his rapierlike assortment of pitches, and his fist-pumping cries after each K, I kept expecting an Oscar nomination somewhere along the line as well. Eck and another indomitable and quirky right-handed reliever, Dan Quisenberry, who died of a brain tumor in September, at the age of forty-five, were character actors who showed their love of the work.

Eckersley had come back to the Red Sox this year for a last hurrah, but injuries limited him. My last view of him in action, early in October, was during an A. L. divisional playoff game at Fenway Park, when he gave up a ninth-inning home run to the Indians' Manny Ramirez. The next night, after the Bostons had gone down for good, I found him sitting alone but bright-eyed in his corner of the Sox's bat-cave clubhouse. He was wearing a scarlet T-shirt, black tights, and white socks, and had one long leg propped up against his cubicle wall. When I ventured to ask if he planned to say anything about retirement, he gestured at his gloom-stricken teammates and the three-deep media crowds around the possibly departing free-agent Sox star Mo Vaughn. "Not right now," he murmured. "I wouldn't want to make a dick of myself."

I said I'd sometimes heard old players say that it wasn't the games or the action that they missed when it came time for them to depart but, rather, the atmosphere of baseball: the guys and the companionship. "Would you—" I began.

"Hell, no! Are you *kidding*, man?" Eck cried. He was laughing. "With me, it was nothing but the action. It was always the chance to be out there competing." He shook his head. "In the back of my mind," he said, "I'd like to stay forever."

LATE-SEASON baseball stabs you. There was that play out in Milwaukee in the final week of the regular season—who can forget it?—when a Cubs outfielder named Brant Brown went back to collar a routine game-ending fly ball in left field, only to see the ball clank off his glove and onto the ground for a three-run error, which won the game for the Brewers, 8–7. The shocker cost the Cubs a game in the National League wild-card race. (Eventually, they

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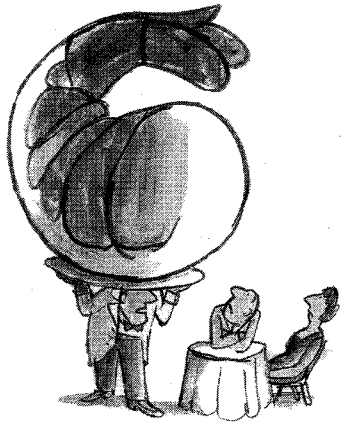

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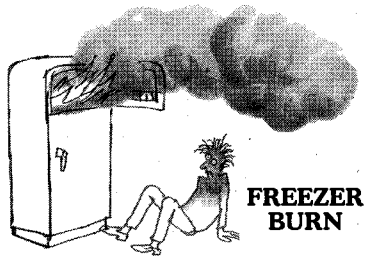

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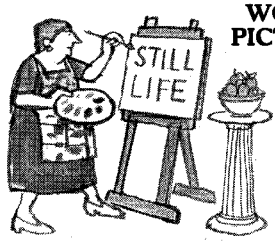

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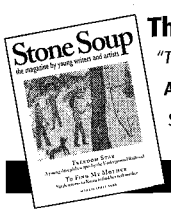

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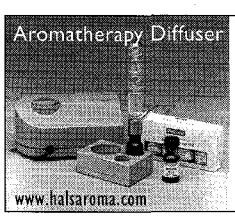

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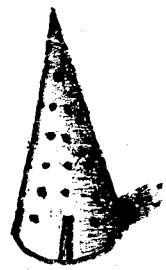
had to qualify by beating the Giants in a one-game playoff.) No one in the sport, it seems, had ever seen that particular horror before. Nor can I put aside a pre-game moment, earlier that same week, when my wife and I were driving out to Shea Stadium on the Grand Central Parkway with our Mets pals Brooke and Peter, and we spied a thick, pale rainbow arc bending toward the right-field side of the park, apparently into the Mets' dugout. "An omen," Peter declared, but then he winced and reversed himself. "No, no," he muttered. "Who can trust omens?" The magic seemed confirmed a bit later, when the Mets batters, happily unloading against the Montreal Expos in the very first inning, rapped the ball to various corners of the field while running up three quick counters. Those three runs represented the last Mets lead of the game, however, and, it turned out, of their hopeful, sporadically brilliant season. They lost that night, 5–3, got shut out the next day, and then moved down to Atlanta and lost all three games of the season-ending series to the Braves. They looked spellbound. They had dropped from first to nowhere in the wild-card struggle, and the TV camera, ranging along the silent dugout—Baerga and Piazza, Olerud and Turk Wendell and Bobby Valentine—once again found men close to tears.



The other divisionals went by in a blur—everyone playing in these jittery best-of-five eliminations looks scared to death, and no wonder—with the Yankees and the Braves sweeping their rival Texas Rangers and Cubs, respectively; the vaunted Texas hitters managed one lone run. In the toughest match-up, the San Diego Padres came up with an unexpected stratagem for getting around the Houston Astros: beat Randy Johnson twice. We are cutting to the chase—the Yankees' chase—but a moment should be set aside for the fifth game of the National League Championship series, in San Diego, which was an all-timer by any measure, with crashing plays at the plate, multiple home runs, the lead lost and regained and lost again, and the huge crowd beside itself with nerves and excitement. There was a numbing, wholly unexpected three-run homer by Atlanta's Michael Tucker against the Padres' ace, Kevin Brown, weirdly on in relief, while the Braves' Greg Maddux, summoned for the same task, picked up the first save of his long career. The Braves, who had fallen into a hole by dropping the first three games of this championship, took the series back to Atlanta by winning this 7–6 thriller but, once there, went down quickly in Game Six, in a shutout. There is simply no accounting for this latest Atlanta disaster—their sixth disappointment in seven post-season journeys in the nineties. This year's club, which had won a hundred and six games during the season and had reinforced itself with top-level trades and the matriculation of some home-grown future stars, was considered perhaps the best Braves team of all, but it fell victim to the old October torpor. One explanation (which the Atlanta executives are no doubt exploring over many a sleepless night) is that the surpassing record of the celebrated Maddux-Smoltz-Glavine starting threesome, who have among them picked up six Cy Young Awards in this decade, has secretly convinced the players that they won't need much more fire or push to take them past the finish line. The Braves will be back on top next year, no doubt, but they're beginning to take on the haunted look of the male Romanovs: something's wrong inside.

HAD the Yanks lost this fall—not entirely a remote possibility—their homely memento would have been the sight of Chuck Knoblauch standing in front of first base with his arms apart and a look of perfect Little League outrage on his face ("Dad, it's against the *rules!*") while the ball lies loose on the ground behind him and the other team's runners scurry, unbelieving, around the bases. I think it was the hilarious familiarity of this tableau, so recognizable to every baseball dad and mom, that induced the unforgiving Yankee bleacherites to forgive Knoblauch (and rise above the "BLAUCH HEAD" tabloid headlines) later on. They even had to let the umps off the hook for this one, which was harder. The Knoblauch incident popped up in the top of the twelfth inning of the second Yanks-Indians American League

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Championship series game, then tied at 1–1, when the visitors' Travis Fryman, with a teammate on first, rolled a useful little sacrifice bunt up the first-base line. Tino Martinez, hustling in from first, appeared cautious with his toss to the covering Knoblauch, and the ball hit Fryman in the back just as he arrived at the bag. Fryman had been nowhere near the three-foot alley outside the right-side foul line, where batters are supposed to travel if they want to avoid an interference call on plays like this, but home-plate ump Ted Hendry, despite Knoblauch's piteous cries, would not call Fryman out. The base runner, Enrique Wilson, had scored all the way from first on Knoblauch's snooze, while Fryman tooled around, breathless, to third, from where he, too, came in while the Indians added a couple of additional runs, to take the game, 4–1, and tie the playoffs.

Hendry, whose lateral strike zone startles in the manner of a straightened-out python, had been abysmal behind the plate, but it was his crew chief, Jim Evans, who took on the media crowd after the game, in a calm little moot court right out of law school. Never mind the three-foot lane, he said; a batter can run to first base via the pitcher's mound, if he so chooses, as long as he doesn't interfere with a throw. But Fryman did interfere, we whimpered—just look where he was when the ball hit him. Ah, said Professor Evans, but where he was was at the bag, or just about, where the rules now permit him the right of fair passage. No interference. Well, hmm, we blustered. Well, uh, Knoblauch should have chased down the ball. And here we all agreed.

This colloquy was one of the better moments for the umps in the playoffs—they made some ugly calls in the World Series, but were generally better—but I will not pursue the well-worn issue further, this time around. The oft-heard phrase "my strike zone" from the umps defines the problem eloquently, as does the stiff-necked complacency of some of these old unioneers, who are never fired or demoted, and rarely retire. Help is to be expected now from Commissioner Bud Selig (now fully in office after his "Acting"-ectomy this summer), and from Sandy Alderson, the newly appointed executive vice-president for baseball opera-

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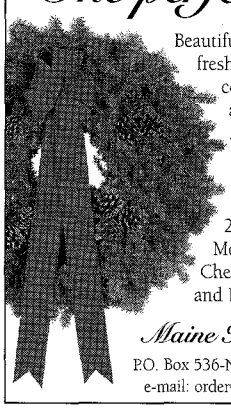

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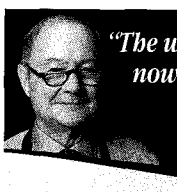

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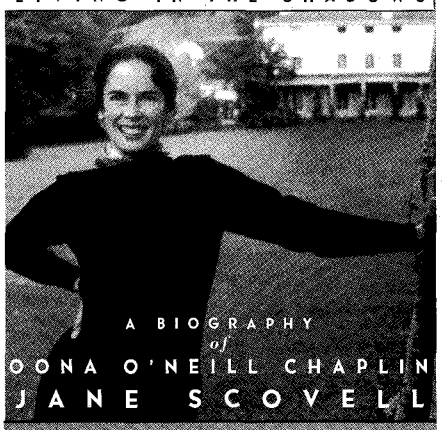

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tions, who together must contrive to have Major League Baseball take over the umpiring from the leagues, restore a single standard of rules for the strike zone, and establish a merit system of promotion and encouraged retirement that will reward the better practitioners in this hard trade. Alderson has been president of the Oakland Athletics; he brings a persuasive new voice into the councils of the pastime, and even the umps may be listening by now.

LOOKING back on the Yankees from this tranquil vantage point, with the confetti bits still in our hair, we might forget the foreboding look and sound of things late at the rock-and-rolling Jacobs Field ("HIT THE ROAD, JACK!" screamed the gigantic Jumbotron signboard above the left-field stands) after the Indians had rocketed four home runs against Andy Pettitte and taken a one-game lead in the playoffs. Two of the round-trippers had been by the free-swinging Jim Thome, and he very nearly added another, with two men on in the first inning of Game Four. The drive fell just short, in right, and El Duque took care of matters thereafter, throwing seven scoreless innings and fanning six Indians along the way. Yankee fans were already familiar with Hernandez's engaging looks and mannerisms—the intense, gum-chewing peer-in for the sign, the quick forehead-wipe with his mitt, the stockinged legs and curved-bill low hat—but this may have been the first moment when all of us, in concert with the Cleveland batters, could appreciate what a pitcher he had become. He can throw inside to left-handed hitters now—something he wasn't able to do when he first arrived—and his rich variety of pitches and angles and looks invites you to pick back through them afterward in your mind, like a food writer over his espresso. One of my favorites I think of as The Skulker—the pitch when he appears to lean lower and suddenly step closer to the batter in mid-delivery: try *this*, Señor! He changes speeds constantly, and struck out Thome, again with two men aboard, in the sixth, with what looked like a changeup of a changeup.

"This was pressure," Joe Torre said afterward. "This is what it's all about."

And El Duque agreed. "I had pressure," he said, "but I had no fear."

The Yankee style of offense, which is watchful, harassing, and punitive, was on brilliant display in the last two championship games and then again, instantly, in the opening game of the World Series, against the Padres. The Yankees' fastidious selectivity at the plate and their sharing of the workload, up and down the lineup, depress the other guys' starters while forcing the hitters into the uncomfortable catch-up mode. In Game Five of the A.L.C.S., still in Cleveland, the Yankee batters staked David Wells to a three-run lead in the first inning and sustained a game-long erosion of the Indians' pitching staff with bases on balls—eleven of them, all told. Back at the Stadium, with the pulsing home crowd now ready for the kill, the offense provided David Cone with a two-run first-inning lead, and then a six-run margin after three. The Indians' pitching had suffered a breakdown, and now their famous defense went south as well: a costly throwing error by the previously impeccable Omar Vizquel and a grotesque butchery by right-fielder Manny Ramirez, who, amid wild noises, climbed the right-field wall in pursuit of a Derek Jeter drive that was at that moment bouncing below him or under him—yo, Manny, down *here*—for a triple. Jim Thome mashed an entertaining mid-game grand slam into the Stadium upper deck, to bring the Tribe within a run, but the homeward cruise was safely concluded at 9–5, with Ramiro Mendoza and then Mariano Rivera as harbor pilots. I felt sorry for the Indians, who badly wanted another shot at the World Series, after coming within two outs of winning one last year. The Stadium bleacher creatures, in terrific voice, were not much moved, however. "Nineteen forty-eight! Nineteen forty-eight!" they bellowed—a reminder, at least to some of the Indians, of the last time a Cleveland team had won it all.

The pains of true fandom are perhaps insufficiently appreciated. Last month, I heard about a retired Cleveland truck driver named John Moskal, who has been an Indian loyalist since boyhood. He had a chance to play professional ball as a young man, but when it fell through he went right on rooting for the Tribe. Now eighty-eight, he was home in bed when the final out of

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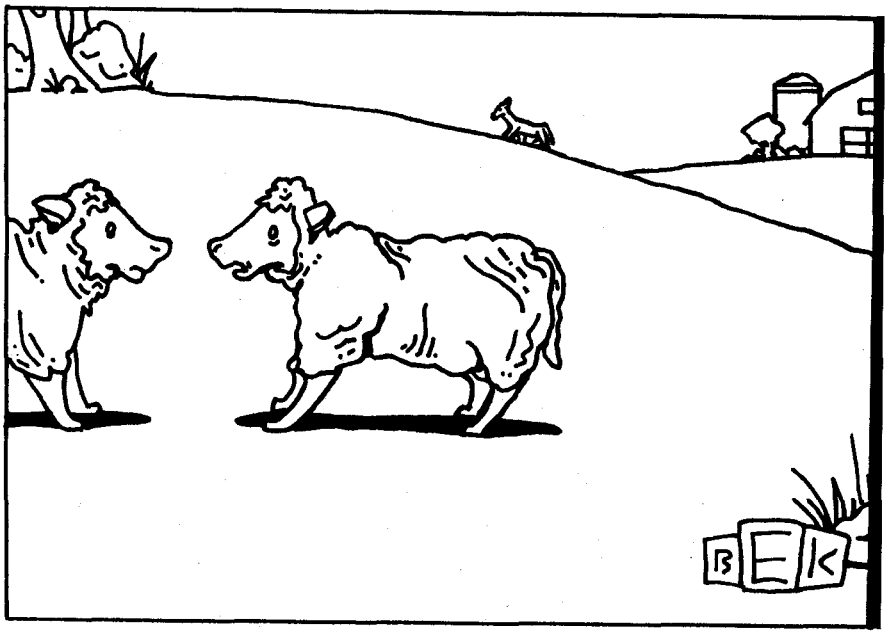
the championships arrived, once again with his team on the wrong end of things. "Oh, dear, the poor old Indians," he said, clicking off the set. He lay back and died.

THE departure of the Indians, as I have suggested, melds itself naturally into the arrival of the Padres in the World Series, again at the Stadium, in which Wells opened against the cold-faced, implacable San Diego right-hander Kevin Brown. This time, the Yankees' quick jump consisted of only a measly pair of second-inning runs, but the batters, waiting and watching and fouling off pitches, kept forcing Brown into situations and more pitches: sixty-four of them, no less, over the first three innings. The game was a dandy—not at all the kind of ceremonial garden party that often kicks off the classic. The Padres moved ahead on two home runs by Greg Vaughn and another by Tony Gwynn, and Brown persisted grimly, twitching away and turning his back, with his odd delivery, and defying the odds with a pallid, tight-lipped sneer. He carried the 5–2 advantage on into the seventh, when he gave up a single and then a killer base on balls to the No. 9 hitter, the rookie left-fielder Ricky Ledee, and had to watch (from the dugout, by now) a three-run homer by Knoblauch—a fly ball to left that hung interminably above the anxious Vaughn and at last slipped into the second or third row of seats, above his jump. Shortly thereafter, and against a different pitcher, Tino Martinez tacked on a grand slam. The Yankees won, 9–6.

The Padres couldn't catch a break in this game—or anywhere in the Series, for that matter. Brown, who was making his fifth start and sixth appearance in the post-season, had looked a bit less than his best, and he also sustained a second-inning line-drive shot to the left shin by Chili Davis. The Martinez game-breaker came after a clear two-out, two-and-two strikeout pitch that was not called by home-plate ump Rich Garcia. Hard lines, perhaps, but no one suggested afterward that the Yanks had been lucky. The heart of the order, Paul O'Neill and Bernie Williams, had gone a collective oh for nine in this game, but Ledee, who had formally thanked manager Torre beforehand for starting him in the World Series, got on base three times, with two hits, a run scored, and two runs driven in. Martinez's home run was redemption for him and his manager after a dreadful three-week slump during which, resolutely unbenched by Torre, Tino had stranded handfuls of base runners in big games. And Knoblauch's poke wiped out any lingering thoughts of his own earlier embarrassment. Torre, by the way, doesn't much like it when Knoblauch raps a homer, since the vision of dingers tends to distort



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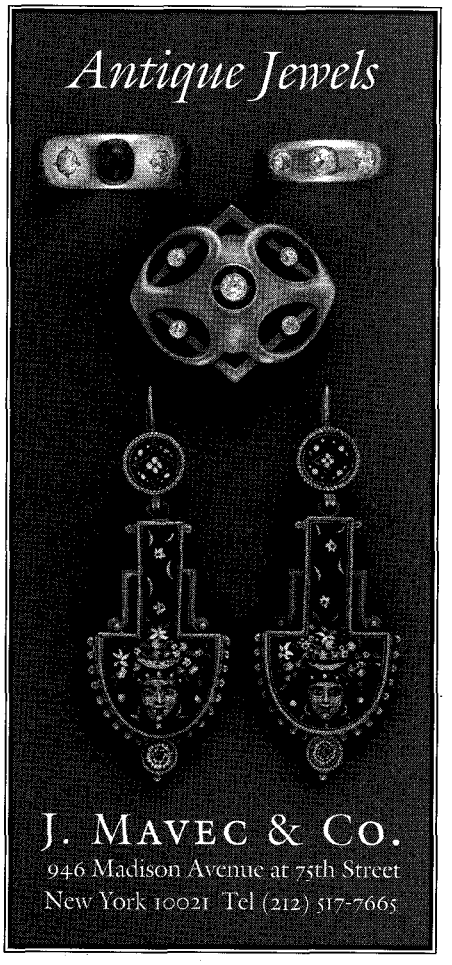

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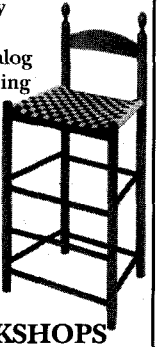
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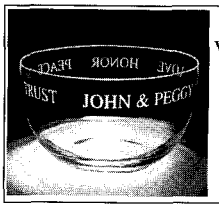

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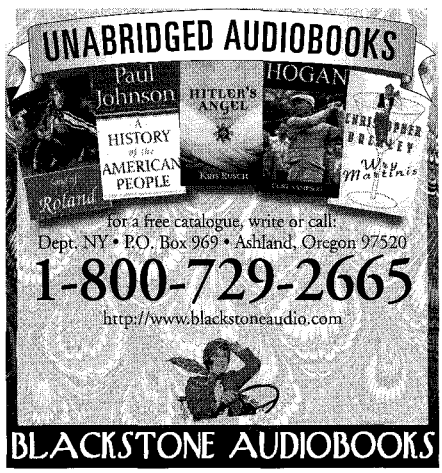

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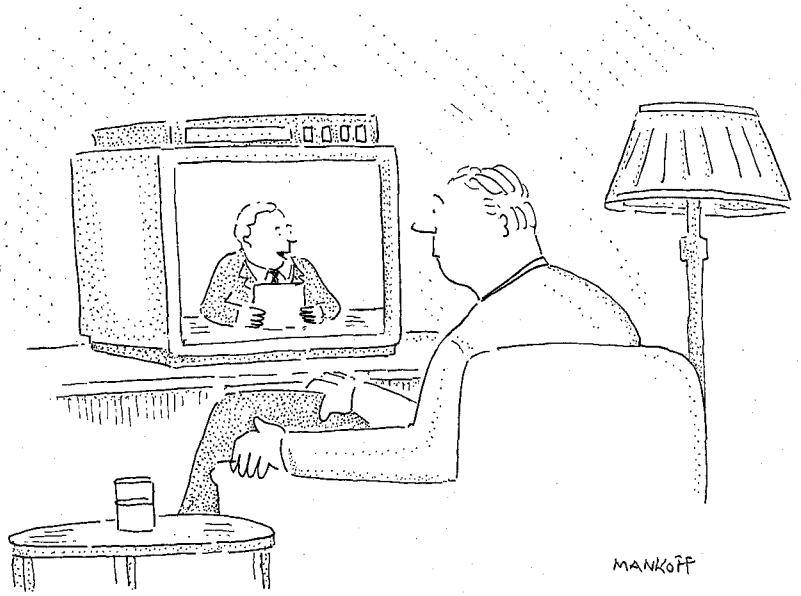

"Both sides described the meeting as a full and free exchange of bullets."

• •

his batting stroke. This time, however, Joe appeared willing to make an exception. "If you're not going to do the right thing, do the right thing," he said gnomically.

THESE retrospections on the Yankees' virtues should not obscure our memories of their dash and style, and the pleasure they took in the day-to-day. Like everyone else in New York, I was also touched by the players' deep concern for their teammate Darryl Strawberry, who underwent surgery for colon cancer just before the playoffs began. There was no P.R. or hype about the squad's gathering at a warmup before the third game of the Texas series, when the players arranged themselves before the television cameras and sent Straw their love. I am not a Yankee fan—the Mets hold my heart—but my head is stuffed with pictures of this likable bunch, who made you see, each time out, what it feels like to play this game right.

I still see Knoblauch at bat, scrunching down, with his knees bent low and his bat held high: a comic-strip lightning bolt. I see Jeter (David Cone calls him "the future captain"), backing out between pitches and slipping the bat backward under his elbow while he fiddles with his wristbands. His helmet is at a jaunty angle, and, with his straight back and cool little semi-smile, he looks like a partygoer in white tie and tails checking himself out in the mirror. Jeter afield—well, take your pick. For now, I'll settle for the play against Ruben Rivera in the fourth and last game of the Series, out in San Diego, when he took three running strides to his left, stretched for the bounding ball, spun, and, still at full tilt but now running backward, threw across his body for the out at first.

Paul O'Neill always puts his signature on these late games. (Who can forget that going-away catch in deep right-center against the Braves' Luis Polonia in the 1996 World Series?) This time, it came in the first inning of the second Series game, with two Padre runners aboard, when he made a swift and sprinting aerial grab at the top of that red "Nobody Beats the Wiz" billboard in right: two or three runs saved in what became El Duque's easy 9–3 ride. I relish each O'Neill at-bat, starting with those practice axe-chopping slashes with his bat, when he looks like a householder attacking an invading back-yard animal that's about to jump on his chest. Even O'Neill failing is a treat: the teeth-baring cry to heaven, the flipped bat, the spinning helmet, and then the muttering, full-discourse trudge to the dugout, and his hands-apart "I give up" complaints to his teammates. Whether he's hitting or not hitting, O'Neill's turns at bat now re-

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mind me of those extended batting seminars we used to get from the Mets' Keith Hernandez. Young Ricky Ledee, after watching O'Neill this October, said he was abandoning his instructional videos.

I think of the cheerful Scott Brosius mostly on the field, where his swirling grabs and imperturbable throws from third base were such an eyeopener for his new team this year. His assiduous storekeeping there immediately freed Jeter to play more up the middle. Batting seventh or lower most of the time, Brosius brought a portfolio sense of authority and weight to the whole batting order. His terrific late hot streak at the plate culminated in two home runs in the Series' third game, the second one a three-run job against the celebrated San Diego reliever Trevor Hoffman—*gone*, over the center-field fence—that put the Yankees ahead in the game at last and, no doubt about it, broke the Padres for good. They lost, 5–4, and were terminated the next night, in a stifling 3–0 shutout by Andy Pettitte. They had persisted staunchly, despite some mystifying pinch-hitting maneuvers by their manager, Bruce Bochy, but their pitchers were battling flu as well as the Yankees, and their sterling third baseman, Ken Caminiti, crippled by multiple injuries, twice fell full-length in the batter's box during his last swings of the year.

I was of two minds about the sweep, wanting the Yanks back home one more time before the end, or, more urgently, wanting one more time around for David Wells. He has been in the headlines all year, with his 18–4 record in the regular going and four post-season wins, and, though he looks like no one else on the club, he stands for everyone. Watching him on the mound makes you laugh. Tucking up his drooping shirtfront, plucking at a shoulder seam, he huffs and hunches, twitches his nose, and lifts his thick arms, freeing up. He's in his bathrobe out there, with everything half-unbuttoned: you see hair and gut. He looks slobby and barkeeper fat until he swings into his delivery, when he becomes loose and light and dangerous.

Wells, a left-hander, has a great arm—you hear it talked about as if it were a disconnected wonder: a famous zucchini at the state fair—but this year, his twelfth in the majors, he became a dominator. His perfect game, back in May, seemed to inspire a tougher view of himself, and kept him from settling for passable on days when he had less than his best stuff. Late this season, you could relish his throwing his flashing curveball outside to left-handed batters and then freezing them inside for the called third strike, but also adding or taking off speeds in the process—the deadly moderato. No one enjoys the big game, the dangerous situation, more than he does, and sometimes he almost brightens up when things go against him. In Game Five of the Indians series, the TV monitors picked up his expression, out on the mound, as he watched another Jim Thome home run fly into the upper deck, and you could see his fanly "Wow!" as he followed its flight.

Joe Torre, visiting Wells in another tight spot, earlier in the post-season, said afterward that he'd made the trip, all in all, so that Wells could make *him* feel more secure. Wells appreciates such confidence ("I was very proud of him tonight," he said once after Joe allowed him to pitch out of a particularly tough pickle), but of course he knows exactly how good he is. I think this is what sets these super-pros apart—far apart—from the rest of us. "This is crunch time," he said after beating the Rangers in the divisionals. "I thrive on this sort of stuff. I want to be the hero! I want to be the goat! . . . I get hungrier and hungrier."

Wells brings the whole package. After he was knocked about in the first inning of that big fifth game of the Cleveland series, giving up a homer and two runs, he said he'd been distracted by the tauntings of some Indians fans who had hung over the right-field bullpen during his pre-game warmup and said unpardonable things about his late mother. He calmed down, though, and by the time Torre came out to get him, in the eighth—with the Yankees now ahead for the rest of the year—he had struck out eleven batters. He wanted to stay in, of course, and even asked Joe to send back the reliever, Jeff Nelson, who was nearing the mound by now. But he lightened up quickly, and gave the fans a merry twirl of his cap as he came off the field. "So to you idiots out there," he said. "This one's for you!" ♦

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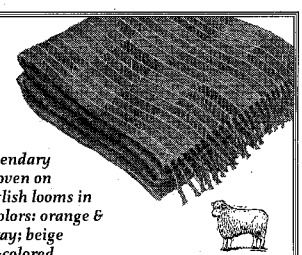

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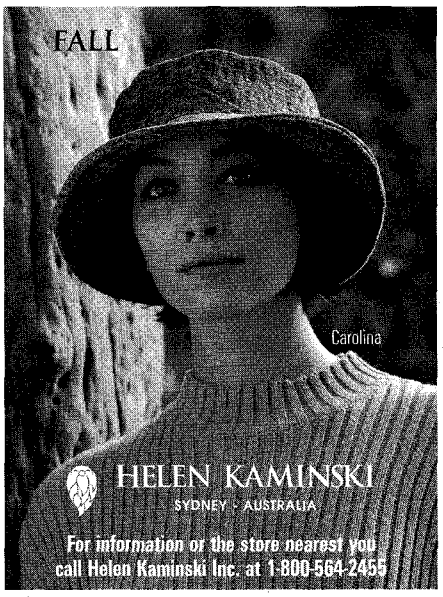

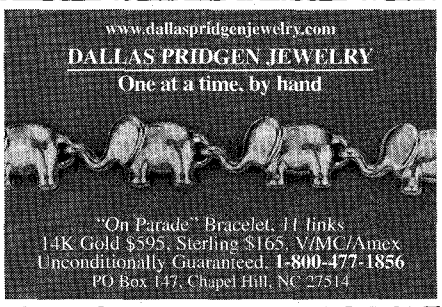

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PERSONAL HISTORY

THE LION AND ME

For the author, the meaning of "The Wizard of Oz" and one of its enduring comic characters was close to home.

BY JOHN LAHR

On November 6th, twenty-six years after "The Wizard of Oz" was last released and on the eve of its sixtieth anniversary, a spiffy, digitally remastered print of the film arrived in eighteen hundred movie theatres throughout the land. With a rub rub here and a rub rub there, "The Wizard of Oz," which never looked bad, has been made to look even better. Dorothy's ruby slippers are rubier. Emerald City is greener. Kansas, a rumpled and grainy black-and-white world, has been restored to a buff, sepia Midwestern blandness. And, since everything that rises nowadays in America ends up in a licensing agreement, new Oz merchandise will shower the planet like manna from hog heaven.

The last time I watched "The Wizard of Oz" from start to finish was in 1962, at home, with my family. My father, Bert Lahr, who played the Cowardly Lion, was sixty-seven. I was twenty-one; my sister, Jane, was nineteen. My mother, Mildred, who never disclosed her age, was permanently thirty-nine. By then, as a way of getting to know the friendly absence who answered to the name of Dad, I was writing a biography—it was published, in 1969, as "Notes on a Cowardly Lion"—and I used any occasion with him as field work. This was the first time we'd sat down together as a family to watch the film, but not the first time a Lahr had been secretly under surveillance while viewing it. The family album had infra-red photographs of Jane and me in the mid-forties—Jane in a pinafore, me in short pants—slumped in a darkened movie house as part of a row of well-dressed, bug-eyed kids. Jane, who was five, is scrunched in the back of her seat in a state of high anxiety about the witch's monkey henchmen. I'm trying to be a laid-back big brother: my face shows nothing, but my hands are firmly clutching the armrests.

Recently, Jane told me that for weeks afterward she'd had nightmares about lions, but what had amazed her most then was the movie's shift from black-and-white to Technicolor, not the fact that Dad was up onscreen in a lion's suit. Once, around that time, while waiting up till dawn for my parents to return from a costume party, I heard laughter and then a thud in the hall; I tiptoed out to discover Dad dressed in a skirt and bonnet as Whistler's Mother, passed out on the floor. That was shocking. Dad dressed as a lion in a show was what he did for a living, and was no big deal. Our small, sunless Fifth Avenue apartment was full of Dad's disguises, which he'd first used onstage and in which he now occasionally appeared on TV. The closet contained a woodsman's props (axe, jodhpurs, and boots); a policeman's suit and baton; a New York Giants baseball outfit, with cap and cleats. The drawers of an apothecary's cabinet, which served as a wall-length bedroom bureau, held his toupées, starting pistol, monocle, putty noses, and makeup. In the living room, Dad was Louis XV, complete with sceptre and periwig, in a huge oil painting made from a poster for Cole Porter's "Du Barry Was a Lady" (1939); in the bedroom, he was a grimacing tramp in Richard Avedon's heartbreaking photograph of him praying, as Estragon, in "Waiting for Godot" (1956).

Over the decades, the popular memory of these wonderful stage performances has faded; the Cowardly Lion remains the enduring posthumous monument to Dad's comic genius. While we were growing up, there was not one Oz image or memento of any kind in the apartment. (Later, at Sotheby's, Dad acquired a first edition of L. Frank Baum's "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.") The film had not yet become a cult. Occasionally, a taxi-driver or a passerby would spot Dad in the

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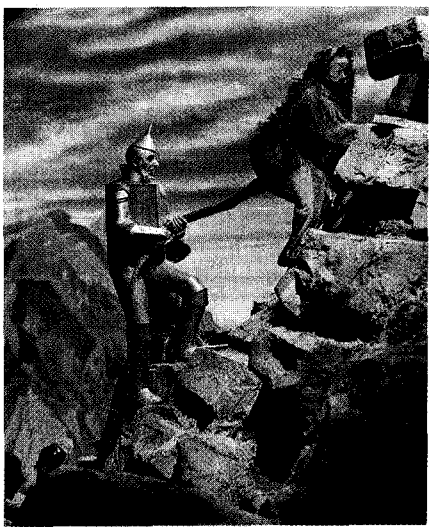
street and call out, "Put 'em up, put 'em *uuuhp!*" Dad would smile and tip his tweed cap, but the film's popularity didn't seem to mean as much to him as it did to other people.

As we grew older and more curious, Mom had to prod Dad out of his habitual solitude to divulge tidbits of information to us. So, as we assumed our ritual positions around the TV—Mom propped up with bolsters on the bed, Jane sprawled on the floor with our Scotch terrier, Merlin, me on the chaise longue, Dad at his desk—the accumulated knowledge we brought to the movie was limited to a few hard-won facts. To wit: Dad had held out for twenty-five hundred dollars a week with a five-week guarantee, which turned into a twenty-six-week bonanza because of the technical complexities of the production numbers; in the scene where the Lion and Dorothy fall asleep in the poppy field and wake to find it snowing, the director, Victor Fleming, had asked for a laugh and Dad had come up with "Unusual weather we're havin', ain't it?"; his makeup took two hours a day to apply and was so complicated that he had to have lunch through a straw; he wore football shoulder pads under his twenty-five-pound lion suit; and his tail, which had a fishing line attached to it, was wagged back and forth by a stagehand with a fishing rod who was positioned above him on a catwalk. It was only memories of the Munchkins, a rabble of a hundred and twenty-four midgets assembled from around the world, that seemed to delight Dad and bring a shine to his eyes. "I remember one day when we were supposed to shoot a scene with the witch's monkeys," he told me. "The head of the group was a little man who called himself the Count. He was never sober. When the call came, everybody was looking for the Count. We could not start without him. And then, a little ways offstage, we heard what sounded like a whine coming from the men's room." He went on, "They found the Count. He got plastered during lunch, and fell in the latrine and couldn't get himself out."



Bert Lahr with the author and as the Cowardly Lion. Both the audience and the family wanted to embrace him.

Dad, in his blue Sulka bathrobe, with the sash tied under his belly, was watching the show from his Victorian mahogany desk, which was positioned strategically at a right angle to the TV. Here, with his back to the room, he sat in a Colonial maple chair—the throne from which, with the minutest physical adjustment, he could watch the TV, work his crossword puzzles, and listen to the radio all at the same time. Except to eat, Dad hardly ever moved from this spot. He was almost permanently rooted to the desk, which had a pea-green leatherette top and held a large Funk & Wagnall's dictionary, a magnifying glass, a commemorative bronze medal from President Eisenhower's Inauguration (which he'd attended), various scripts, and the radio. On that afternoon, long before Dorothy had gone over the rainbow and into Technicolor, Dad had donned his radio earphones and tuned in the Giants' game. "Bert!" Mom said. "Bert!" But Dad didn't answer.

This was typical. At dinner, after he finished eating, Dad would sometimes wander away from the table without so much as a fare-thee-well; at Christmas, for which he never bought presents, the memories of his unhappy childhood made the ritual exchange of gifts almost unbearable, so he'd slip back to his desk as soon as possible. Now, just as his ravishing Technicolor performance was about to begin, he'd drifted off again, retreating into that private space.

That was irrefutably him up there, disguised in a lion's suit, telling us in the semaphore of his outlandishness what he was feeling in the silence of his bedroom. It was confusing, and more dis-

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turbing than I realized then, to see Dad so powerful onscreen and so paralyzed off it. "Yeah, it's sad believe me missy / When you're born to be a sissy / Without the vim and *voive*," Dad sang, in words so perfectly fitting his own intonation and idiom that it almost seemed he was making them up. In a sense, the song *was* him; it was written to the specifications of his paradoxical nature by E. Y. (Yip) Harburg and Harold Arlen, who had already provided him with some of his best material, in "Life Begins at 8:40" (1934) and "The Show Is On" (1936).

"I got to the point where I could do him," Arlen told me. And Harburg, who once said that he could "say something in Bert's voice that I couldn't with my own," saw social pathos in Dad's clowning. "I accepted Bert and wanted him for the part because the role was one of the things 'The Wizard of Oz' stands for: the search for some basic human necessity," he said. "Call it anxiety; call it neurosis. We're in a world we don't understand. When the Cowardly Lion admits that he lacks courage, everybody's heart is out to him. He must be somebody who embodies all this pathos, sweetness, and yet puts on the comic bravura." He added, "Bert had that quality to such a wonderful degree. It was in his face. It was in his talk. It was in himself."

When the song began onscreen, Dad swivelled around in his chair to watch himself; once the song was over, he stepped forward and switched over to football.

"Dad!" we cried.

"Watch it in Jane's room," he said.

"Is it gonna kill you, Bert?"

Dad's beaky profile turned toward Mom; his face was a fist of irritation. "Look, Mildred, I see things," he said. "Things I coulda . . . I'm older now. There's stuff I coulda done better." Mother rolled her eyes toward the ceiling. I returned us to Oz. Dad pulled the headphones up from around his neck and went back to the hand of solitaire he'd started. His performance was enough for the world; it wasn't enough for him.

ONSCREEN, the Lion was panic-stricken but fun; his despair was delightful. ("But I could show my prowess / Be a lion, not a mouesse / If I only had the *noive*.") The Lion had words for what was going on inside him; he asked for help and got it. At home, there were no words or even tears, just the thick fog of some ontological anxiety, which seemed to have settled permanently around Dad and was palpable, impenetrable—it lifted only occasionally, for a few brilliant moments. "I do believe in spooks. I do. I do. I do" is the Cowardly Lion's mantra as the foursome approach the Wicked Witch's aerie. In life, Dad was constantly spooked, and his fear took the form of morbid worry. It wasn't so much a state of mind as a continent over which Dad was the bewildered sovereign. Onstage, Dad gave his fear a sound—"*Gnong, gnong, gnong!*" It was a primitive, hilarious yawping, which seemed to sum up all his wide-eyed loss and confusion. Offstage, there was no defining it. The clinical words wheeled out these days for his symptoms—"manic depressive," "bipolar"—can't convey the sensual, dramatic, almost reverent power of the moroseness that Dad could bring with him into a room, or the crazy joy he could manufacture out of it onstage. It was awful and laughable at the same time. We couldn't fathom it; instead, we learned to live with it and to treat him with amused affection. He was our beloved grump. He was perpetually distracted from others, and, despite his ability to tease the last scintilla of laughter from a role, he had no idea how to brighten his own day. "I listened to the audience, and they told me where the joke was," he told me backstage at S. J. Perelman's "The Beauty Part" (1962) after he'd got a howl from a line that had no apparent comic payoff. Why couldn't he listen as closely to us?

When you kissed Dad on the top of his bald head—it smelled deliciously like the inside of a baseball glove—he didn't turn around; when you talked to him, he didn't always answer; sometimes he even forgot our names. That was the bittersweet comedy of his self-absorption. But the Lion confessed his fears, he looked people in the eye, he was easy to touch (even Dorothy, in their first fierce encounter, puts a hand on him); he joined arms with the others and skipped off down the Yellow Brick Road. At the finale, their victory was a triumph of collaboration. In private, as even our little family get-

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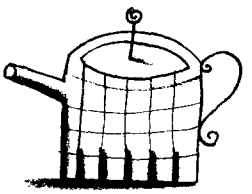
together made apparent, Dad never collaborated; he never reached out (in all the years I went off to camp or college, he wrote me only one letter, and it was dictated); he never elaborated on what weighed him down and kept us under wraps. But there was a gentleness to his bewilderment, which made both the audience and the family want to embrace him. His laughter was a comfort to the world; in his world, which was rarely humorous, we comforted him. All the family forces were marshalled to keep Dad's demons at bay and "to be happy," an instruction that translated into specific behavior that would generate no worries—good humor, loyalty, gratitude, obedience, and looking good.

If Dad had had a tail, he would have twisted it just as the Lion did; instead, he had to make do with his buttons and with the cellophane from his cigarette packs, which he perpetually rolled between his fingers. What was Dad afraid of? We never knew exactly. Things were mentioned: work, money, Communists, cholesterol, garlic, the "Big C." Even a fly intruding into his airspace could bring a sudden whirlwind of worry as he tried to stalk the pest with a flyswatter. "The son of a bitch has been hit before," he would say, lashing at the fly and missing. Dad's global anxiety seeped into the foundation of all our lives; it was hard to see, and, when it was finally identified, it had to be fortified against. One of the most efficient ways to do this was to treat Dad as a metaphor—a sort of work of art, whose extraordinary and articulate performing self was what we took to heart instead of the deflated private person who seemed always at a loss. Any lessons Dad taught about excellence, courage, perseverance, discipline, and integrity we got from his stage persona. His best self—the one that was fearless, resourceful, and generous, and that told the truth—was what he saved for the public, which included us; otherwise, as every relative of a star knows, the family had to make do with what was left over. Even at the end of our Oz viewing, Dad brushed aside our praise, which seemed only to increase his anxiety. As he shuffled into the kitchen to get some ice cream, he glanced over at Mom. "If I'd made a hit as a *human being*, then perhaps I'd be sailing in films now," he said.



When "The Wizard of Oz" opened in New York, on August 17, 1939, fifteen thousand people were lined up outside the Capitol Theatre by 8 A.M. Dad's photograph was in the window of Lindy's, across the street, and the *Times* declared his roar "one of the laughingest sounds since the talkies came in." "Believe me it was a tonic for my inferiority complex which is so readily developed in Hollywood," Dad wrote to Mildred, who would become Mrs. Lahr in 1940. As an animal, in closeup, and eight times as large as life, Dad, with his broad, burlesque energy, was acceptable; there was no place for his baggy looks and his clowning, eccentric mannerisms in talking pictures except on the periphery of romantic stories. Despite his huge success, Metro soon dropped his option. He signed for a Broadway musical, "Du Barry Was a Lady." "Well, how many lion parts are there," Dad said as he departed from Hollywood.

Over the years, especially after my son was born, in 1976, I'd catch glimpses of Dad as the Lion, but, perhaps out of some residual loyalty to his bias, I could never sit through the film. The hubbub around the movie irritated me, because the other accomplishments of the performers were swept away in the wake of its unique and spectacular success. I think Dad knew that he was a hostage to technology: a Broadway star whose legend would go largely unrecorded while, by the luck of a new medium, performers who couldn't get work on Broadway would be preserved and perpetuated in the culture. Nowadays, the general public doesn't know about the likes of Florenz Ziegfeld, Abe Burrows, Ethel Merman, Bea Lillie, Billy Rose, Walter Winchell, Clifton Webb, and Nancy Walker, whose stories intersected with Dad's.

What lives on is the Cowardly Lion. When I watch him now, I don't see just the Lion; I see the echoes—the little touches and moves—of those long-forgotten sensational stage performances that Dad condensed into his evergreen role. His floppy consonants, slurred

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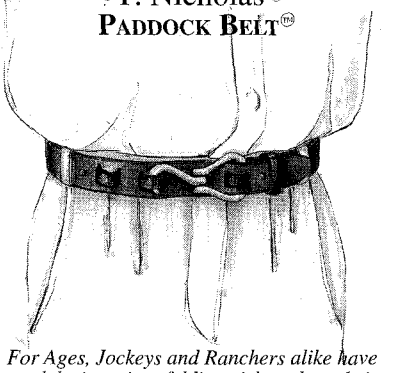

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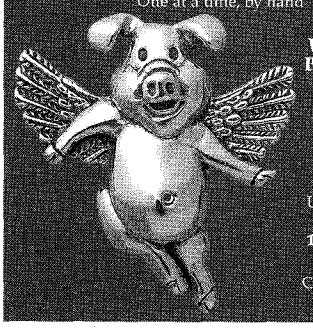

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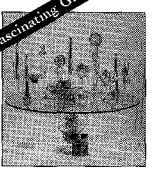

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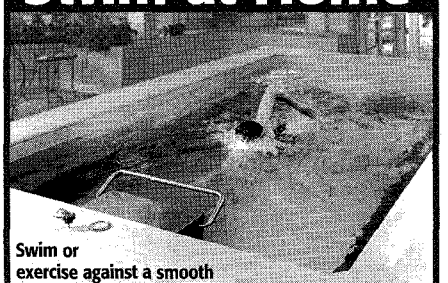

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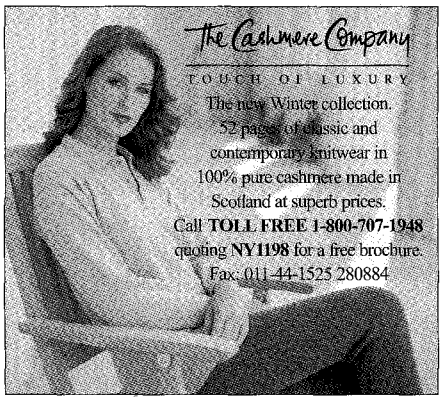

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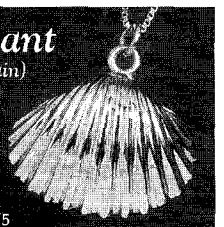

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vowels, malapropisms, and baritone vibrato all derived from the collection of sophisticated operatic sendups he'd developed first for Harburg and Arlen's "Things" (from "Life Begins at 8:40") and "Song of the Woodman" (from "The Show Is On"), to be perfected in "If I Were King of the Forest":

> Each rabbit would show respect to me,
> The chipmunks genuflect to me,
> Tho' my tail would lash
> I would show compash
> For ev'ry underling
> If I, if I were king.
> Just king.

The Cowardly Lion's boxing bravado ("I'll fight you both together if you want! I'll fight you with one paw tied behind my back! I'll fight you standin' on one foot! I'll fight you wit' my eyes closed!") and his woozy body language (the shoulder rolls, the elbows akimbo, the bobbing head) were grafted onto the Lion from Dad's portrayal of the punch-drunk sparring partner Gink Schiner, in his first Broadway hit, "Hold Everything" (1928). And when the Wizard awards the Cowardly Lion his medal for courage, even Dad's vaudeville act, "What's the Idea" (1922-25), came into play: he swaggered like the policeman he had impersonated while trying to both arrest and impress the hoochy-coochy dancer Nellie Bean. "Read what my medal says—'Courage,'" the Lion says. "Ain't it de truth. Ain't it de *trooth*."

In later years, one of the many canards that grew up about the film was that there was a feud between the old pros and the young Judy Garland—that they had tried to upstage her and push her off the Yellow Brick Road. "How could that be?" my godfather, Jack Haley, who played the Tin Man, told me. "When we go off to see the Wizard, we're locked arm in arm, and every shot is a long shot. How can you push someone out of the picture with a long shot?" Although Garland wasn't pushed out, her "Over the Rainbow," which became the anthem of a generation, was almost cut from the movie three times. According to Dad, Harburg hadn't liked the original tune, which he found too symphonic and heroic. Years later, when I was working on a book about Harburg's lyrics, Arlen explained the deadlock, which Ira Gershwin had finally been called in to arbitrate. "I got sick to my stomach," Arlen told me. "I knew Ira didn't like ballads. He only liked things with a twinkle. Ira came over, listened, and said, 'That's a good melody.' I knew the heat was off. Yip tried out a few musical notions and came up with the lyric." Another of their favorite numbers, written for "Oz," was one called "The Jitter

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Bug," in which bugs bite the travellers, who begin to dance with the trees and flowers. It was cut for reasons of pace and of balance, and though it gave Dad a big dance number, he never expressed regret over the loss of the material. What he remembered was the hard work and the offscreen hacking around. "Smith's premium ham!" the old pros yelled at one another before takes. "Vic Fleming had never experienced guys like us," Dad told me. "Some legitimate directors can't imagine anybody thinking about something else and when he yells 'Shoot!' just going in and playing." He went on, "We'd kid around up to the last minute and go on. You could see he got mad and red-faced. Some actors try and get into the mood. They'll put themselves into the character. I never did that. I'm not that—let's say—dedicated."

DAD died on December 4, 1967, the day I finished my book about him. He had never read any part of it. I saw him again in a dream on January 25, 1977. I'd been arguing about comedy with the distinguished English actor Jonathan Pryce, and had stepped out of his dressing room to cool off, and there was Dad in the corridor. "He was wearing his blue jacket with padded shoulders," I wrote in my diary. "He smelled of cologne, and he felt soft when I hugged him. I said, 'I love you.' I can't remember if he answered. But it felt completely real, with all the details of his presence—smell, feel, look, silence—very clear. I woke up sobbing." I added, "When will we meet again?"

So far, he has not reappeared in my dreams; but, in another sense, as the reissue of "The Wizard of Oz" only underscores, he has never really gone away. He's a Christmas ornament, a pen, a watch, a beanbag toy, a bracelet charm, a snow globe, a light sculpture, a bedroom-wall decoration. (Neiman Marcus's Christmas catalogue includes Dad in "The Wizard of Oz" bedroom—"the ultimate child's bedroom"—which, at a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, is more than twice as much as he was paid for the movie.) In the space of only two days this fall, on the merchandise channel QVC, a new offering of Oz paraphernalia sold about a million and a half dollars, which seems to prove the claim on the Warner Bros. fact sheet that "'The Wizard of Oz' has Universal Awareness." I should be outraged by all this, I suppose, since Dad's estate gets no money. I should deplore the trivialization of him as an artist and bemoan the pagan impulse to make household gods of mortal endeavor. (When Dad took up painting, in his last years, and realized that there was a market for Cowardly Lion artifacts, even he got the franchise itch, and stopped doing flowers and vegetables in order to churn out lions, which he signed and sold to friends.) But, if I'm honest with myself, these tchotchkes comfort me. They are totems of Dad's legacy of joy, and of his enduring life in the century's collective imagination.

I'm an orphan now, but I'm full of gratitude for the world that made me. I get letters from older readers who knew my parents, and who tell me in passing how proud Dad was of Jane and me. It's nice to know. I think Dad loved us, but it was in the nature of his way of loving that the knowledge is not bone deep. So the marketed trinkets work for me like Mexican *milagros*—talismans that are extensions of prayer and are tacked by the prayerful onto crosses in thanks for the miracle of survival. I'm pushing sixty now, but I find that the conversation with one's parents doesn't end with the grave. I want Dad back to finish the discussion—to answer some questions, to talk theatre, to see me now. Almost anywhere in the city these days, I can turn the corner and run into him. I stroll past a novelty store on Lexington Avenue, and there's Dad as a cookie jar. I steal a peek at the computer of a young woman in the Public Library, and, by God, there he is as a desktop image. I go to buy some wrapping paper at the stationery store, and his face stares at me from the greeting-card rack. "Hiya, Pop," I find myself saying, and continue on my way. ♦

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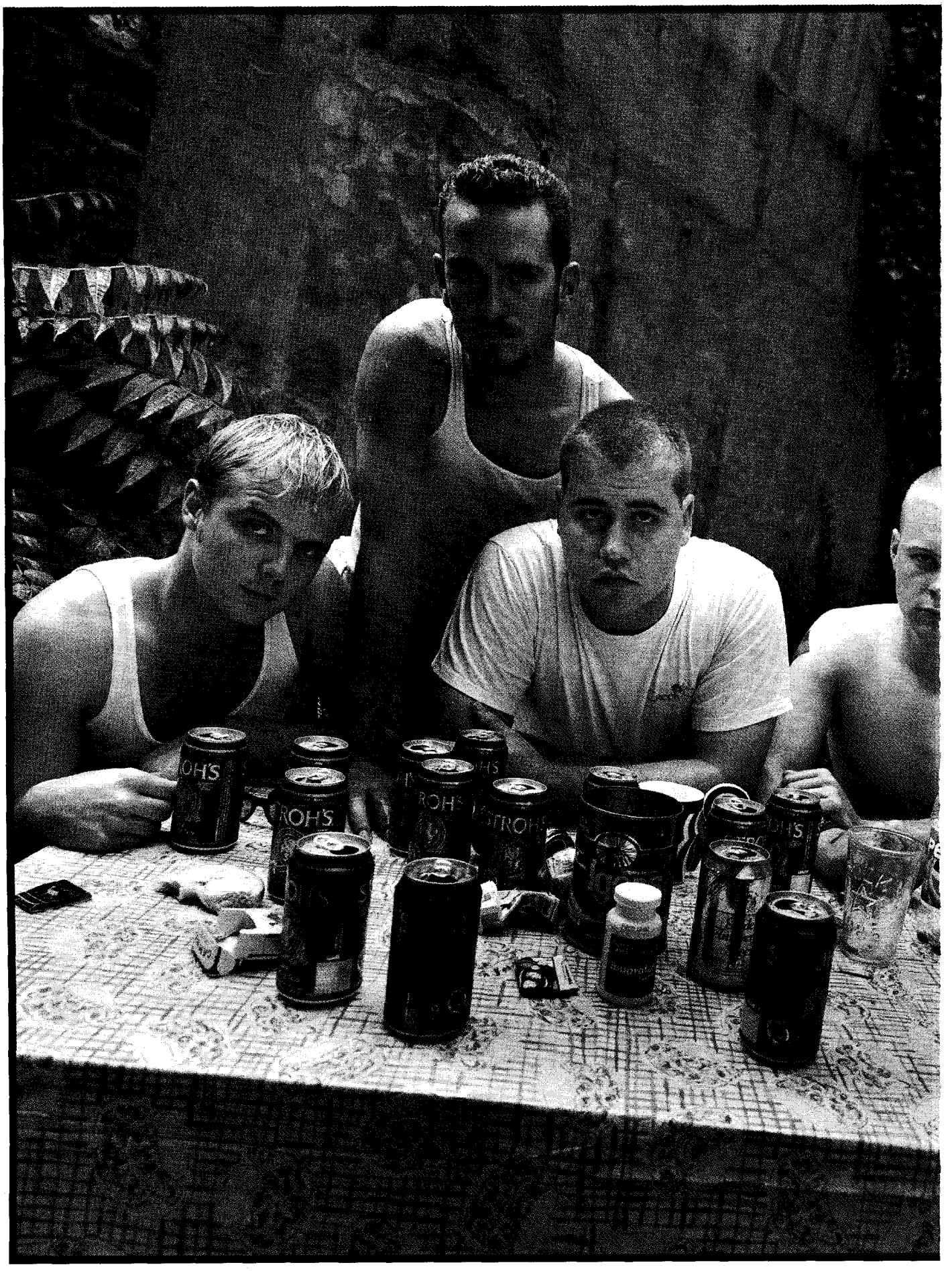

The do-it-yourself tour, from Montana to Manhattan: Sputniks members, from left, Richie Rowe, Grady Gadbow, Chad Dunda

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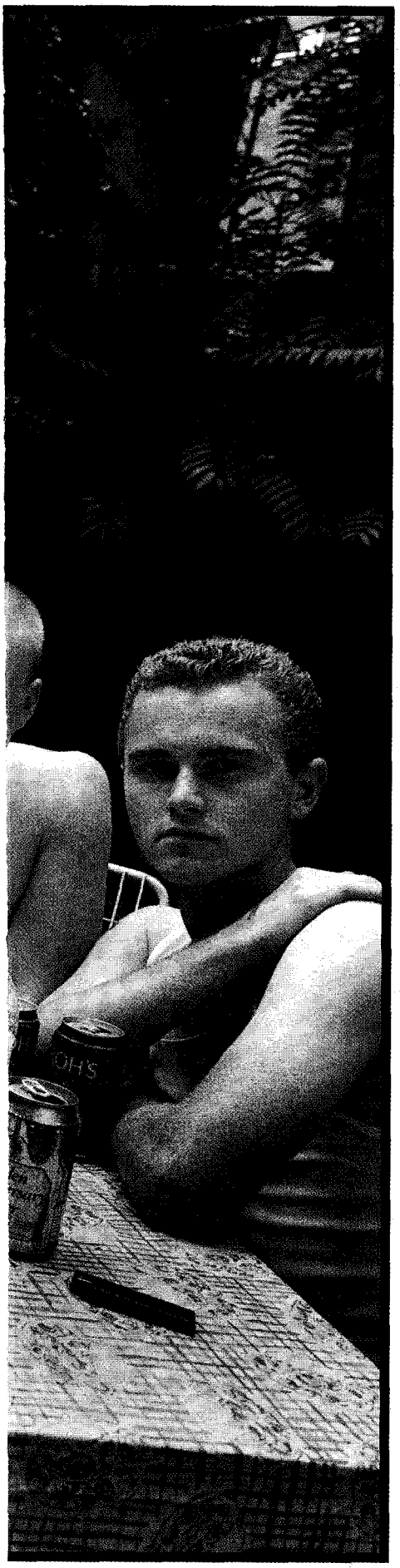

adie Leif Fredrickson, and Zach Dundas.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY ELLEN MARK

ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

ROCKET SCIENCE

How many layers of irony can a punk band endure?

BY WILLIAM FINNEGAN

GRADY GADBOW was drawing rocket ships on scrap paper. "When we're as big as the DKs, kids will be drawing these on their lockers at school," he said. By "the DKs" he meant the Dead Kennedys, an early punk band from California whose logo was, according to Grady, "carved into every skateboard in the country for about ten years." By "we" he meant the Sputniks, a present-day punk band from Missoula, Montana, who were at that moment setting off on their 1998 tour—grinding up toward the Continental Divide on a fine late-summer afternoon in a frumpy Ford Econoline van that Richie Rowe, one of the band's guitarists, had just bought from his grandmother. I guessed that Grady's fantasy of massive stardom was a goof—few things are more suspect in the punk underground than commercial success, and deadpan put-ons are, moreover, one of the Sputniks' specialties—but, as was often the case, I couldn't be sure. Grady did seem serious when he announced a plan to get a Sputniks rocket ship tattooed on his upper arm, perhaps above a strand of barbed wire, when the band got to New York City.

"I just have to see if these places—Chicago, New York—really exist," said Richie.

"They don't," Chad Dundas, the drummer, said firmly.

One reason the byplay among the band members could be hard to read (besides the fact that they are all between the ages of twenty and twenty-three) was that, except for Richie, they are all blood relatives. Zach Dundas, the bassist, is Chad's brother, and Grady is their first cousin. So the concentric circles of intimacy and in-jokes tumbling eastward in the van were exceptionally dense. What they made of a graying guy from New York who barely knew Rancid from Fugazi (two major present-day punk bands), and yet had invited himself on their tour, they were kind enough not to mention. Grady always introduced me, when he had to introduce me, as "the media."

I had not come to Montana because the Sputniks were famous, or were even on the verge of fame. I had come because I knew, vaguely, that there is a world of American kids who love rock and roll but scorn *Rolling Stone* and *Spin* and, above all, MTV—kids who get their musical news from *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll*, *Punk Planet*, and, in Montana, an antic, densely written zine called *Shat Upon*. Before leaving Missoula, I had tried to assess the Sputniks' place among the thirty-odd local bands—Missoula is a college town (University of Montana), with a busy rock-and-roll scene—but I hadn't learned much. Although rock and roll can be a fractious subculture, full of genres (rockabilly), subgenres (psychobilly), and endless verbal sectarian warfare, all the rock musicians I talked to in Missoula were weirdly polite and uninformative about their colleagues. "The scene's too small," Grady explained. "You can't afford to be too critical." The owner of the town's hippest record shop—a storefront specializing in independent garage and rockabilly labels on vinyl—did say of the Sputniks, "Their music is good, and people here like them, but they don't really do anything to set themselves apart—smash things up, blow fire, play naked." These standard career moves were too obvious, I thought, for a group as irony-sensitive as the Sputniks. But now the band was taking an equally traditional route to greater recognition: D.I.Y. touring.

D.I.Y. (do-it-yourself, just as at Home Depot) is a founding ethic and battle cry of punk, applied to everything from music to magazines and on to clothes and politics and the dark arts of advertising. This democratizing, anti-corporate

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impulse is the lifeblood of the punk underground, and a major reason that punk survives as a movement more than twenty years after it burst onto—and then faded from—the pop-cultural scene. (It has since reappeared and disappeared several times, in various musical forms.) Punk-spawned D.I.Y. ideology is also the original source of the profusion of small, independent American record labels that emerged in the late nineteen-seventies and continue to thrive. Before punk, rock clubs rarely booked bands that didn't have contracts with one of the big record companies. Today, even unsigned bands, like the Sputniks, can tour and have a fair hope of finding small, like-minded audiences in many parts of the country. Tastes change, both regionally and nationally—and I had my doubts about whether the Sputniks' vintage, highly political brand of hardcore punk would travel well beyond Montana—but punk has clearly helped nourish a modern American rite of post-adolescent passage: form a band, get a van, hit the road, play rock and roll for kids you don't necessarily know, sell homemade T-shirts and stickers and self-produced seven-inch records, and hope to make enough to cover expenses. Beneath this sort of modest, scruffy project, great passions and ambitions and cultural currents can, of course, seethe.

But organizing even a modest tour—the Sputniks were looking at ten or twelve shows in less than three weeks—actually takes some doing. Grady, using contacts gathered from record jackets, bands that had passed through town, and a hundred other tendrils of the punk-rock grapevine, had come up with a rough schedule. Zach had used E-mail to try to nail down more gigs. Meanwhile, the band members all moved out of the house they had been sharing, and three quit their day jobs—Grady as a line cook in a vaguely Asian restaurant in a mall, Chad as the night manager of a gyro shop in the mall, and Richie as a "civil process server," or repo man. Zach, who wanted to hold on to his job, as a reporter on a weekly paper, took a leave of absence. (All four were toiling intermittently toward U.M. degrees, but only Zach's was in sight.) Leif Fredrickson, a Sputnik pal home for the summer from Vassar, decided to come along as the tour's roadie. Thus was the mission launched.

From my banana seat on the floor of the van, I asked about the band's name. The most audible response was from Chad: he said, "This *is* rocket science," nodding at the stack of amps, guitars, and drums that filled the van.

We sailed through high green hayfields, following the Blackfoot River. At Lincoln, a small town near the Divide, we turned up a dirt road to see where Theodore Kaczynski had lived. Richie suggested that the band play some benefits to help restore the Unabomber's property to its original state—get his cabin back from California, or wherever the F.B.I. took it, turn the place into a historic site. When nobody responded, he told me, "We're always playing benefits for women's clinics and shit."

With Japanese punk storming on the tape deck ("Kung Fu Ramone Culmination Tactic!"), we crossed the Divide and slipped down the east front of the Rockies, arriving in Great Falls at dusk. The tour's first gig was in a community theatre near the courthouse. Downtown Great Falls was deserted except for a parking lot next to the theatre, which was full of loitering kids—skaters, punks, blandly dressed girls with sweet, scared faces, all waiting for the show. Richie backed the van up to a door, and the Sputniks started hauling their equipment inside. Zach reported, with relief, that the stage was clear. "We've played here before," he said. "Once they had the set for an Agatha Christie play up, and we had to be careful not to knock over any bookshelves or lamps."

THE Sputniks ripped through "20 Minutes to the Year 2000," a frenzied tune on which Zach appeared determined to destroy his vocal cords:

> Dig it, baby, there's a red star rising
> Launch a rocket on diesel power
> The workers' state will be built in space
> From parts we stole down in Mexico

All the band members seemed to mutate when they played, each suddenly acquiring a whole new personality, but none more so than Zach. Offstage, he is wry, gentle, self-mocking, precise. Onstage, he turns into a shrieking, bouncing, furious sprite. He even switches back and forth in the intervals between songs. "More spurious left-wing politics," I heard him mutter after they crashed out the last power chord of "20 Minutes" (a song he wrote) in Great Falls. "20 Minutes" takes less than two minutes to play, as does almost every Sputnik song. A hostile music critic for the Missoula daily paper once accused the band of trying to "set the land speed record for white noise," but their ultra-fast play is a point of pride. Their songs are nearly all basic three-chord rock, with conventional structures and timing, but their raw energy is meant to electrify listeners like a shot of epinephrine. And the formula seemed to be working in Great Falls, where forty or fifty kids moshed and waved their fists in front of the stage.

> I've seen the warning signs of a great big freeze-up coming
> And I'm looking forward to it all the time
> Don't fuck with the syndicate!
> Don't fuck with the syndicate!

"Don't Fuck with the Syndicate" seemed to be known to the crowd, some of whom shouted along with the refrain. It is one of many angry, apocalyptic songs written by Grady and played by the Sputniks. Grady takes personally the rapid, ugly, unplanned growth of his home town—Missoula and its hinterland have become a popular destination for retirees and refugees from the cities—and he does not hesitate to generalize from there. In a song called "Takeover" he roars,

> It's one big fucking strip mall
> From Sacramento to Pocatello
> And half the American workforce
> Is wearing paper hats.

(This song used to be called "Fuck You, California," until Chad changed it. "Chad's like the Security Council," Zach explained. "He has a veto.") Grady has the lanky, sharp-featured, long-sideburned charisma of a traditional leading man, and the studded leather belt he wears is about as close as any of the Sputniks get to an old-style rock-star fashion gesture.

Richie, who trades off on lead guitar with Grady, has the band's calmest stage persona—oddly, since he is something of a rowdy popoff in real life. Although he does play fast and loud, Richie has been known to dissent from the hardcore orthodoxy, enforced among the Sputniks largely by Grady, which says that all songs must be vehe-

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ment and harsh. He even comes up with songs inspired by his love life, and sometimes manages to get them onto the band's set list. As the tour began, he and Grady were collaborating on a work in progress, "You'll Get Yours," about "various total pricks we've met." The first verse was about a Missoula police officer who had beaten up Richie's little brother. The second was about a jock type who had recently cold-cocked Grady for a smart remark.

Chad, who anchors the band on drums, briskly clicking his sticks to start a song, rivals his big brother, Zach (who is half his size), for the onstage-transformation award. Shy and sardonic in conversation, he explodes with emotion when he plays. Chad's big, round face, normally impassive, suddenly becomes an endlessly malleable mask, twisting into ungodly, anguished shapes—expressions I found almost too private to look at—as he flails away, laying down a surprisingly clean, bright, solid rail of a beat for the rest of the band to travel on. Between songs, he, too, reverts to his usual self, offering gentle banter that feels wildly at odds with the raging musical assaults it intersperses. I winced in Great Falls when Chad, panting, casually plugged, between songs, the Sputniks T-shirts and seven-inch records "on sale from the attractive blond kid near the door" (Leif, who had set up a card table), and even tossed into his spiel an "I might add," which inspired some lout to bellow from the shadows, "You talk too much, fat boy!" Chad seemed unfazed.

Contentious interaction with the audience is a punk-rock tradition. Chad once told me, with a measure of pride, that he had been spit on by Green Day in a club in Missoula before they got famous. (Green Day, a classically obnoxious California "pop punk" band, hit the big time in 1994.) "Mike Dirnt even hit me on the head with his bass," Chad said. "But I think that was an accident." Punk bands have been spitting on audiences, and vice versa, since the seventies, but much of the contention between crowds and performers is so layered with irony and insiderism that it can be incomprehensible to outsiders. For instance, audiences often call out for songs that they don't actually want to hear. "Free Bird," a cornball rock anthem by Lynyrd Skynyrd, is a favorite gag call-out at punk shows.

"The important thing is to stay hydrated."

• •

The Sputniks closed their set with a number called "Inhibitions," which had kids climbing halfway onto the stage, screaming the refrain, "Fade away! Fade away!" Afterward, I talked to a tall, striking-looking girl in thrift-store clothes who said she was a snowboarder and high-school senior and had driven four hours from Billings, where she lived, and which had no musical scene worth mentioning, just to hear the Sputniks, who were one of her favorite bands. "Inhibitions," she said, was their best-known song, and she, for her part, planned to move to Missoula the minute she graduated from high school.

Kids clustered around the van while the band, sweaty and yet extremely cool, reloaded equipment. It had been a fair night at the gate. Leif had sold ninety dollars' worth of gear, and the Sputniks' cut of the door (two other bands were on the bill) had come to eighty. There was a gruelling drive ahead—Grady had booked them into a bar in Moorhead, Minnesota, seven hundred and fifty miles away, the next night—but everyone was energized by the set just played. The parking lot cleared as the crowd streamed back inside the theatre to hear the evening's headliners, a grizzled four-piece anarchist outfit from Portland called Detestation. We stood around waiting for Chad to get back from a nearby Hardee's with Cokes. And the sheer strange tenderness of this project, the vulnerability and audacity of these small-town boys taking their do-it-yourself show on the road, into the urban far corners of a huge, indifferent country, suddenly made me shiver in the warm summer night.

"I SEE these kids, who are so passionate about their music, and have this nationwide word-of-mouth underground, as a classic avant-garde," said Daryl Gadbow, Grady's father, who is a reporter for the Missoula daily paper. "And they're all in the classic bind. They all want to make it—except, if they make it, then they'll have sold out, they'll no longer be cool."

Grady himself said, "A good way to be cool is to be the first one to hate a band. Like I hated Offspring in 1995, and that was *early*. I loved 'em in '91, but by '95 they were already cheesy, and I knew it." The success/cheesiness problem is all but inescapable, in Grady's view, but turning against a beloved band is actually no joke—it's painful. Rancid, which

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came out of the same fertile late-eighties East Bay (California) punk scene as Green Day did, once played music that "just *rocked*," said Grady, and there was no higher praise in his lexicon. "Then they got all big and slick and totally changed. They got into this cheesy thing, just trying to sell more records. Now I hate 'em. They really hurt my feelings."

Some kids take such feelings to extremes. An all-ages club in Berkeley called 924 Gilman Street has been the center of the East Bay punk scene for more than a decade. A few years ago, when Jello Biafra, the charismatic front man for the Dead Kennedys in their heyday, dropped by Gilman Street, he was set upon and savagely beaten by a group of young punks who decided he must have "sold out."

Grady has a theory about why commercially successful bands get cheesy. "I think it's just the easy, decadent life they end up leading," he says. "They have nothing to do all day but sit around and play music." To the uninitiated, that might sound like a formula for *improving* one's music. But musicianship has never been an untrammelled value in rock and roll, and certainly not in hardcore punk. Rawness, anger, excitement—these cherished assets can be obscured by refined technique. I was struck by the emphasis on catharsis even at a practice session of the Sputniks I watched in Missoula. The session was held in a tiny basement space, where the roar was genuinely deafening and individual performances seemed, at least to me, utterly lost. The starts and stops were crisp, but the point, overwhelmingly, was the group effort, the ferocious scrum, and at the end of each song there were guilty little contented laughs and murmurs.

"You O.K.?"

"Yeah, brought some stuff up on that one."

"That's good."

In Grady's view, the problem for a punk band when it's leading the easy, rock-star life is that the band soon has nothing to say. "Because they don't have to scramble to survive, they lose their hard edge, which is usually what made them good in the first place." Many punks, Grady said, believe in "a major-label conspiracy—that these big music companies will get hold of a good band and convince them to play stupid bland shit to sell records." The truth, he suggests, is that successful bands simply lose their street cred.

There was another way to go, Grady insisted. It was possible for a band to build a following by D.I.Y. touring and word of mouth, then sign with a small independent label and make enough money so that band members could quit their day jobs, but without going commercial and selling out. We were sitting in a Missoula bar listening to a band from Tucson called the Weird Lovemakers while Grady sketched this career path for me. The Weird Lovemakers themselves might be examples of longevity with integrity through modest success, he thought—they all looked to be around thirty.

While Grady was speaking, a steady stream of young women found their way to him and demanded his attention for a hug. This was obviously another attraction of the business. As Chad later put it, "You'll know you're a rock star when your second album is full of songs about how you're tired of all these groupie hos."

One Missoula band, the Skoidats, hit the jackpot not long ago and signed with a New York label. To hear the Sputniks tell it, there had rarely been a more sickening development. The Skoidats were hardly even a real band. What happened was that two Rude Boys—these are guys who wear porkpie hats and narrow neckties and generally seek to emulate a mid-sixties Jamaican subculture of the same name—came down from Helena. Like all Rude Boys, they were into ska—a pre-reggae Jamaican feel-good music that has had several revivals. "Helena is the ska capital of Montana," Zach explained, then added, "which is kind of like being the tallest guy in the dwarf circus." The Rude Boys were looking for a horn section—all ska bands must have a horn section—and they recruited two guys from the U.M. band, plus a hippie kid named Gardner for the drums, and they started dressing the three of them in little suits and teaching them to play ska. All ska bands sound the same, basically, but, as ska bands go, the Skoidats were pretty good. Then ska got hot, and A. & R. scouts started scouring the countryside for ska bands, and, the next thing anybody knew, the Skoidats were signed up and moving to New Jersey and booked on a national tour.

Even more worrisome, in its way, was a recent explosion in the popularity of punk. The Vans Warped Tour, a coast-to-coast, corporate-sponsored summer extravaganza starring, among other bands, Rancid, is

"And from now on you'll address me as Jesse 'The Governor' Ventura."

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just the latest example of what hardcore punks regard as the rampant commodification of punk's once subversive message. Of course, most of the big-name bands are not hardcore but pop punk—"bands with no guts," as Grady explained. "Bands like NOFX, who slow things down, maybe throw in a little ska breakdown, something that sounds like polka, some showoff guitar solos, a little this, a little that, none of it for any reason, just to be catchy, just to sell records. Their playing isn't solid." He shrugged, disgusted.

Actually, the Sputniks are not of one mind about these (or many other) matters. Grady is the purist about hardcore, always trying to sharpen and define the band's "sound." He has occasionally purged from the Sputniks' repertoire any compositions deemed unduly "emo": this was the name given to a brief musical reaction to early punk's non-stop biliousness, and the term survives as a synonym for "sentimental" or "arty." Richie thought the song-list purge had been a mistake. "Because some of those songs were good, and we'll never get them back, because they're not written down anywhere," he told me. Grady seemed more concerned about how the crowds on tour would perceive their sound. "The emo guys will hate us," he said. "And some people will hate us because they'll think we're pop punk. That's because of the wackachicka—the strumming pattern we use." He demonstrated the wackachicka. I asked what made the Sputniks not pop punk. "We're not too slick and cheesy," Grady said testily. "And we don't fail to rock."

Then there are the band's politics. Though many of the Sputniks' songs advocate revolution and anarchy and "class war," it's not always easy to tell what percentage of that is tongue-in-cheek. They sometimes play up the Soviet connection to their name: in a photograph on the sleeve of one of their records, the band is holding up a U.S.S.R. flag, and the address on the sleeve says "Republic of Montana." But Zach, who once studied Russian, has visited some of the former Soviet republics and harbors no illusions about the region's regimes, past or present.

And while some of Grady's lyrics may look forward, somewhat didactically, as in "Don't Fuck with the Syndicate," to "the inevitability of a class struggle," these aren't necessarily band-wide sentiments. Richie, for instance, "has no politics whatsoever," according to Grady. "His dad offered him forty bucks to vote for Bob Dole, and he did it." Richie didn't deny the story, except to add, "But he never paid me!"

If the Sputniks were looking at their 1998 tour as more than a chance to expand their horizons and let some new people hear their music—looking at it, perhaps, as a chance to be discovered by some big-city A. & R. scout—they definitely weren't telling me about it. Other kids were less discreet. The snowboarder girl from Billings who came to see them in Great Falls, after hearing that I was "the media," dropped her cool-chick reserve and gushed, "They're one of the best bands coming out of Montana right now. I really hope they get signed, I do."

FROM Great Falls, we drove all night on two-lane roads, going east through moonlit grasslands, past far-flung ranches, through one-horse towns called Moccasin and Mosby and Jordan and Circle, across the Musselshell River. Orange lightning glowed and fired off to the south. Zach, who was driving, kept himself awake by telling me about his travels in Estonia and Russia. He mentioned that there were a lot of new immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Missoula, and some consequent "Russophobia." Every time a car was stolen, certain locals blamed the new immigrants—another reason for the band to ally itself with that Cold War bogey Sputnik.

Dawn broke as we ghosted through a canyon of badlands into Glendive. We all tripped into a truck stop for breakfast. Those who had slept were groggy. Those who had not were giddy. Zach was bouncing in his chair, weirdly ebullient, laughing at everything.

North Dakota got steadily less funny, though, as we drove the great, bright, flat length of it. We were now on Interstate 94. At a pit stop near Jamestown, we stumbled into a convenience store, where Richie took offense at the grinning enthusiasm of the guys behind the counter. "What the hell are they *smiling* about?" he asked me. "This is spooky. I know a lot of people who have to do this shit, but I've never seen anybody *happy* about being in *this* line of work before." In his glowering disgust I thought I detected the germ of a Sputniks song.

And the next morning, listening to a hideous extended blast of feedback at the end of a Fugazi song, "By You," off an album called "Red Medicine," while sitting outside a row of cheap new condos in the ganglionic sprawl south of Fargo, North Dakota, I thought I heard something else. The feedback suited my mood precisely. I found I was actually enjoying its harsh, inhuman complaint. The question was why. The Sputniks had made it in time to the gig in Moorhead, Minnesota—which is across the state line from Fargo—and they had played well, despite their exhaustion. The show had been in a bar, with a very drunk, moderately hip crowd, and Grady had smoothly teased the crowd with Montana shtick about the Unabomber and militia camps. He had introduced a ferocious, gun-happy rant called "Firepower"—which he had once described to me as "a poem about my arsenal"—by saying, "This is a good old Montana song. My dad used to sing this to me when I was a little kid." The set kicked, and the band's cut of the door was, by its standards, grand—a hundred and ten dollars. After the bar closed, there had been a round of parties (it was Saturday night)—a carousal from which I checked out early, in favor of sleep.

The Sputniks had finally crashed on the floor of a condo belonging to the mother of the drummer in a Missoula punk band called Fireballs of Freedom, whose members came originally from Fargo. That was how we came to be in the endless strip mall south of the city. The anonymous, new-construction bleakness of the area was epic. It was a sweltering, car-dotted plain of randomly arranged office parks, drive-in banks, a Country Furniture Clearance Center, blocks of condos, billboards, and brand-new Lutheran churches that looked like discarded rocket parts. "This was all farmland five years ago," said Gator, one of the Fireballs. "Now it's just more fucking 'Brady Bunch' suburbia." Gator and the other Fireballs had come back to Fargo temporarily to make money, they said. Wages were shitty here, but not as shitty as in Missoula, and rents were lower.

So this was the physical setting—and it wasn't all that different from the strip-

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mall sprawl south and west of Missoula that so incensed Grady—in which angry, prolonged feedback suddenly became pleasing music in my ears. It mattered that I had been hanging around with the Sputniks, all of whom had worked at minimum-wage jobs in strip-mall land for years. In any case, at that moment the nihilist fury of punk made complete intuitive sense to me. Fuck all this shit, I thought—just vaguely aware that this incoherent obscenity was a common punk trope.

Cultural historians sometimes talk about a "punk moment," by which they usually mean the emergence in Britain around 1976 of bands such as the Sex Pistols and the Clash. But punk is a complex, durable, and transnational response to the pains of post-industrial adolescence, and its moment never quite seems to pass. There was actually a wave of New York punk, led by bands like the Ramones and Blondie and Patti Smith, before the British explosion, and it, too, had plenty of precursors, such as the New York Dolls, the Velvet Underground, and, in England, the early Stones and T. Rex. There have been many waves and wavelets and variations since, with punk providing essential inspiration for numerous other rock genres, including grunge, thrash, and speed metal. In the end, though, punk's interest is probably less musical than cultural. Its original base in Britain was a potent mixture of impoverished working-class rage and middle-class art-student alienation. In this country, it flourished first in the urban avant-garde and then slowly found a devoted following among pissed-off white kids in suburbs and small towns. Vague (and not so vague) generational grievance, self-loathing, acute confusion, a sense of millennial dispossession—all these remain essential to punk's appeal.

For aspiring punk rockers, as for gangsta rappers, a lousy childhood—or, at least, the rumor of one—is de rigueur. The official biographies of the East Bay punk bands who have recently hit it big all emphasize single mothers, juvenile delinquency, youthful alcoholism, and members who formerly lived in illegal squats or on the streets. Once Zach and I were talking about a band called the Makers, who are admired by the Sputniks. "They're from Spokane," he said. "It's such a shitty, white-trash city, and they're from the shittiest part of it—this neighborhood people call Fel-

EASEL

CIRCLE IN RED

NOT talking, for a change, but keeping a customary icy distance from everyone else in the room, the self-assured members of the celebrated Algonquin Round Table look out from a mural by Natalie Ascencios, which will be unveiled in the West Forty-fourth Street hotel's lobby

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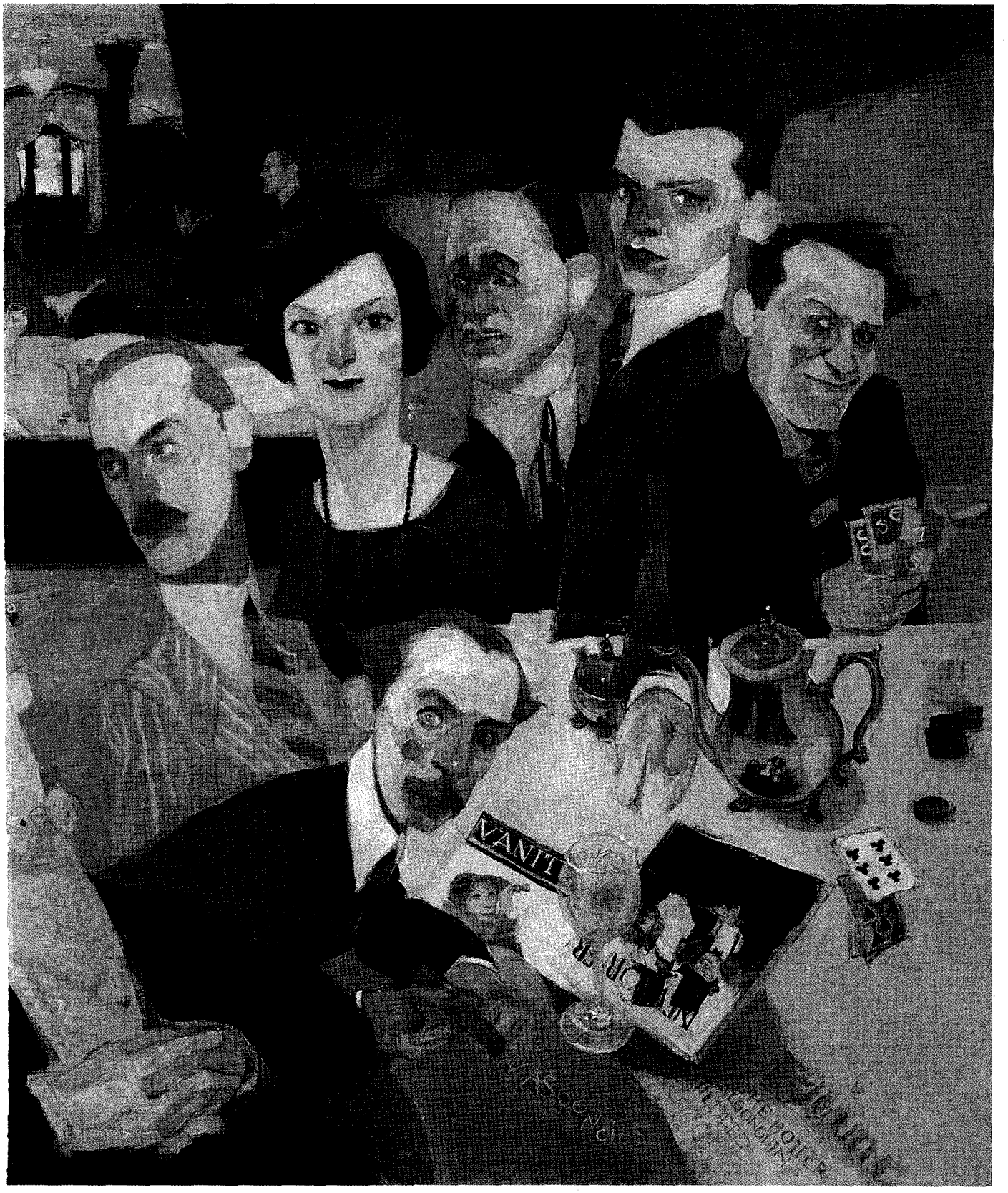

next week. In front: Edna Ferber, Alexander Woollcott, and Franklin P. Adams. In back: Marc Connelly, Harpo Marx, George S. Kaufman, Robert Sherwood, Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley, Harold Ross, and Heywood Broun. Ross, the founder and first editor of this magazine, relied on some of these drinking and dining and card-playing writers and wits—old pals from what they themselves liked to call the Vicious Circle—to help fill the early issues. Connelly and Sherwood and Benchley were famously sweet by temperament, but they could hold their own in the daily repartee, which sometimes ran to vitriol, hangover remedies, and unabashed logrolling. What appears certain here is that all hands are thinking hard about that next great impromptu line, which might turn up in F.P.A.'s "The Conning Tower" column in tomorrow's *World*.

—ROGER ANGELL

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"Trust me, Senator. Many people have active and fulfilling sex lives long after they've retired from Congress."

• •

ony Flats." These humble beginnings obviously hadn't hurt the Makers' viability as tribunes of the disenfranchised. The Sputniks had no comparable credentials—indeed, Chad once described the band to me as "pathetically middle class"—and yet their musical hearts were in the right (hardcore) place. They might sound at first—they did sound at first—like a thousand other loud, unintelligible punk bands. But I was growing fond of some of their songs. I was even beginning to share, I decided there in Fargo, some of the low-grade, florid depression that helped it all make sense.

As a cost-cutting measure, the Sputniks were now eating mustard sandwiches. We were heading into Minneapolis. "You know who the stupidest band of all time was?" Grady asked me. He answered his own question: "The Doors." I was startled. When I was fifteen, the Doors were my favorite band. "Their songs meant absolutely nothing," Grady declared. How strange, I thought. To me and my friends, "When the Music's Over" had meant absolutely everything. "And you know who the second-stupidest band of all time was?" Grady asked. I dreaded to know. "The Grateful Dead." The Dead had been my favorite band in college.

I once asked Zach if there were any good punk love songs.

"There's one I like," he said. "It's by Jawbreaker, called 'Chesterfield King.' It's about sharing a cigarette at the beginning of a relationship. It's really beautiful." He paused. "Of course, then there are a couple of other songs, like sequels, about the relationship going to hell."

We rolled into downtown Minneapolis. It was a Sunday afternoon. The Sputniks' gig was at an all-ages club behind a coffeehouse in a refurbished loft district. The band was first on the evening's bill, expected to start playing at the absurdly early hour of 6 P.M. There was almost no one around.

The Sputniks seemed nervous as they began to play. A few kids had drifted into the big, bare room behind the coffeehouse. Some were clean-cut, others heavily pierced and punked out. They all looked as if they spent a lot of time here. "We're the Sputniks. We're from Missoula, Montana," Grady said. Nobody gave any sign of having heard of Missoula. The band played a couple of crashingly fast, tight songs. The crowd response was muted, but a few more kids drifted in. Grady tried some Montana patter, which got no laughs. The next couple of songs got a few people dancing, including a pretty girl in satin shorts and a leg cast. Panting between songs, Zach said, "We need a place to stay tonight." Grady added, "So take us home, and we'll tell you all the weird and wonderful things we know." A bunch of boys in aloha shirts and thrift-store hats—members of the band that would headline that evening—started amusing themselves in the back with exaggerated dance steps. They called out for songs that no punk band would play: " 'Sweet Home Alabama!' " " 'Feel Like Makin' Love!' "

Richie introduced a tune called "Dishpit Warrior" by asking, "Anybody here wash dishes for a living?" No hands went up. Richie was incredulous. "I don't fucking believe it," he muttered. All the Sputniks (and Leif, too) had washed dishes for a living. ("Ask that in Missoula," Richie told me wonderingly after the show, "and three-fourths of the crowd raise their hands.") In Minneapolis restaurants, apparently, it was Mexicans and Ethiopians who washed the dishes, not middle-class white kids. The refrain of "Dishpit Warrior" goes, "Dishpit warrior! Class war!" It's monotonal and harsh but catchy. The band then decided to play "Inhibitions," even though Grady had told me that they'd played it in Great Falls only because the crowd there insisted, and certainly the song didn't fit with the sound they were after now. The Minneapolis crowd didn't know the song, of course, and they didn't shout along with the refrain, "Fade away! Fade away!" But the band did a fine, rousing version, I thought, with all three guitarists turning to face Chad as he took up the vocal, singing, "Is there anybody out there? Everybody's too scared to move!"

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By the end of the set, the boys' nervousness had passed. They were sweaty, cocky, bright-eyed. The girl in the satin shorts and leg cast whooped and clapped. Most of the crowd joined in. And a kid named Dave, from a band called the Misfires, who were set to play next, invited us to sleep at his house.

I HAD changed my mind. The Sputniks did need to stoop to theatrics to set themselves apart from all the other bands out there. Smashing things up, blowing fire, playing naked—O.K., they were old hat. What about bottle rockets? The band actually had a history with these wicked little fireworks. Grady had been thrown out of their last house in Missoula after an indoor bottle-rocket fight, and Richie had once burned himself after an unsuccessful attempt to fire a bottle rocket "out of his butt." This trick involved wedging the stick on which a bottle rocket is mounted between some drunken daredevil's buttocks; it had enjoyed a brief vogue among Missoula's punk rockers. Could the Sputniks perhaps fire bottle rockets out of their butts onstage? The band considered this notion silently. We were riding in the van through muggy green Wisconsin dairyland. Nobody seemed much excited. Could the bottle-rocket butt trick, I asked, *be* performed sober?

"That's pretty much out of the question," Grady said.

We had stayed a second night in Minneapolis, and the band had managed to get itself onto the bill at the coffeehouse again, opening for 88 Fingers Louie, a well-known punk band from Chicago. But the take had been terrible—twenty-five dollars the first night, ten dollars the second, and negligible record and T-shirt sales. Zach, who was in charge of tour finances, recording income and expenses, declared, in the middle of a desultory political discussion, "We're just petit-bourgeois capitalists ourselves." After a beat, he added, "On this trip, so far, *très* petit." The band was now eating almost nothing but mustard sandwiches. When we stopped for gas near a Sam Goody's, I suggested they try to sell a few records to the store—they had sold records to several music stores in Minneapolis. "Sam Goody's doesn't sell anything without a bar code," Chad said. (Not so, I later learned.)

But wasn't "music," in fact, almost beside the point? Watching the Sputniks as they toured, seeing them get up and perform their swift, disciplined blasts of brutal sound in town after town, I had at times been put in mind of a travelling martial-arts troupe. Much as I had come to like some of their songs, I found in them none of the tenderness, playfulness, or soulfulness that people usually look for in "music." Their sets were super-aggressive pieces of male display. Local females were meant to appreciate them—hence a rising tide of groupie jokes in the van. As we moved now into bigger cities, the band's performances also had another, more tentative aspect—a question, I thought, about whether they were in fact doing this punk-rock thing right or whether they might not be mired in some provincial, passé version of it.

This cultural question had seemed to get a reassuring answer in Minneapolis. After we went home with Dave, of the Misfires, he and the Sputniks talked into the night—about bands they liked, about a vintage Vespa scooter parked in Dave's kitchen, about Dave's awesome collection of Japanese Godzilla videos. The house was strewn with grubby, high-quality thrift-store kitsch. Dave clearly had the same refined appreciation of no-brow culture that had caused Chad to become addicted to watching pro wrestling on cable. And the next night a band called Cadillac Blindside had taken the Sputniks home, and in the morning Grady and one of the Blindsides began trading imitations of Detestation's singer's scratchy roar, back and forth, each roaring into the other's face—like young lions mock-fighting—until they decided they had it right, and quit with little head-shaking laughs. These guys were on the same wavelength.

And it wasn't necessarily the antisocial, self-destructive wavelength often associated with punk. Their music might be rough and hypermasculine, but plenty of punkers are obviously gentle, ironic souls. Outrageous dress, outrageous haircuts, drug abuse, violence—these standard features of the punk caricature are less important than outsiders assume. At the same time, the Sputniks seemed always aware that they were not being the bad boys they might be. The band had a great chance to misbehave in Madison, Wisconsin. A gig in Milwaukee, arranged by a skinhead identified only as Jis, had fallen through, giving them a night off, so we spent it in Madison, at the home of the parents of a friend of mine. It was a spacious, tasteful suburban house, and our hosts had left for work by the time we got up. My friend's mother had carefully laid out breakfast for six, and had even left us cards to say how much she had enjoyed having us—one card for me, one for "The Anarchists." Inside the card for

"He's very angry. He wanted the tuna and egg."

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the boys, it became clear from her gracious note that she thought the band's name was the Anarchists. The band studied the card worriedly. Zach was deputized to write a reply. With pen in hand, he said, "If we were a real punk band, I'd write, 'Sod off! We're the Sputniks!' " Instead, he wrote a gushing, self-deprecating thank-you note.

THE Sputniks had been looking forward to playing the Fireside Bowl, a fabled venue in a working-class Latino neighborhood on the North Side of Chicago. The place was an old bowling alley and bar, cool and dim and vast on a hot afternoon. The stage occupied one end of a long, narrow space that ran perpendicular to the lanes, which appeared to be out of service. The Sputniks were set to play third on a five-band bill. The headliners, a ska band called Siren Six, would go last. As the sun set, kids began to arrive—most of them white, dressed in extra-baggy jeans or khakis, and doing their best to look streetwise.

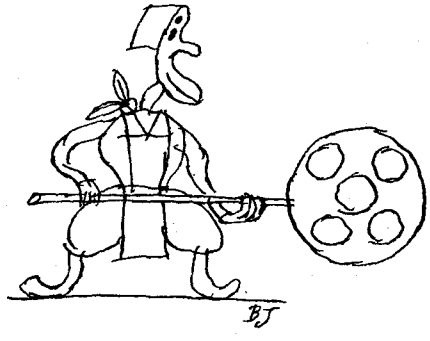
The crowd grew to sixty, then eighty, while the band before the Sputniks played—a lacklustre brat-punk trio called the Perps. Most of the audience drifted away from the stage area during the Perps' set, onto big old curved plastic benches behind the bowling lanes. By the time the Sputniks were ready to play, there was nobody within a tennis serve of the stage. The band bravely launched into its set, playing "Takeover" and "20 Minutes to the Year 2000," and a handful of kids approached the stage. Grady glowered at the masses hanging back on their benches, and between songs he thanked "you and you and you," pointing to each of the people who had come over to listen. "The rest of you, I don't know," he said. Even Zach grew irritated. He asked the crowd what they were afraid of. The Sputniks played a few more songs. Nobody moved from the benches. Chad remarked that he hadn't realized they sold "balcony seats" at punk shows. He offered a "nice shiny dollar" to the best dancer during the next tune, and one of the Perps came up with a quick, spastic shuffle to claim the prize. Still, the crowd hung back.

Chad's high-hat cymbal fell apart, causing a delay. Grady asked the crowd if anybody had an anvil. "That's what we do in Montana," he said. "Anything goes wrong, we just forge a new part. These guitars we play are all solid steel. Made 'em ourselves." Nobody laughed, or gave any sign that they knew what an anvil was. Grady wondered aloud if they were alive. Zach said something about "fun," then asked if kids in Chicago were familiar with the concept. The sneering teen-agers on the bowling benches now turned their backs on the band. The Sputniks grew apologetic, promising to play just two more songs and then get the hell out of town. Strangely, I thought they were playing exceedingly well.

After this gruesome set ended, I invited the band across the street for a Mexican dinner. Grady grimly declined, saying that after such an experience he felt obligated to stick around and "show some support" for the other bands.

Those of us who went to eat got back just in time to see Siren Six, the headliners, play. It was a completely changed scene. The entire crowd was now massed in front of the stage, dancing in furious unison. These kids, it seemed, were some kind of ska cult. They had just been waiting to leap into the stylish solo dance—high-elbowed, stage-oriented, rhythmic running in place—that ska inspires and that they had obviously been practicing for many long hours in front of mirrors at home. Siren Six was a loud, slick, androgynous sextet, originally from Minneapolis and now living in Hollywood, who were all dressed in black. They had a pompadoured, love-daddy lead singer with a good voice, a female trombonist, a keyboard player. They were churning out lush, catchy, brass-heavy love songs, and their saxophone player's patter between tunes was smooth and fey. "I really think things are getting better," he said silkily. It wasn't clear whether he was referring to a general, non-punk idea of the world or to the bad smell the Sputniks had left behind. Then he said, "Yes, it's starting to get a whole lot sexier in here."

When the Siren Six finally quit, they eased the pain for their fans by promising to return in a couple of months, during a four-month fall-winter tour they had booked, and to rock the old Fireside yet again. It was one of their favorite venues, they assured the crowd, which was lining up ten deep to buy their CDs. I couldn't look at Grady, who was silently manning the Sputniks' unvisited merchandise table. Chad, who was sprawled on a bowling bench, looked philosophical. So I asked him, "What's Plan B?"



"You're looking at it," he said. "Plan A was college, and I'm going back to that plan as soon as we get home."

THAT night, we stayed in a "punk house," where the promoter of the next night's show—the Sputniks had two gigs booked in Chicago—had said we would be welcome. It was on the South Side of town, in another working-class Latino neighborhood. We got there at about midnight, not all of us in the best of moods, and picked our way through a dark, evil-smelling yard. Before we reached the house, we were accosted by a shirtless, dreadlocked kid named Jason, who was reeling drunk. "Sputniks!" He had been expecting us. He led us inside. The house was under some kind of D.I.Y. renovation, with buckets and sawhorses stacked everywhere and plywood walls painted primer gray. The ceilings were very low—I couldn't stand up straight anywhere. Jason led us into a kitchen of sorts, where half a dozen very drunk people were shouting blearily. There seemed to be an extraordinary number of tattoos in the room. Clouds of flies swarmed under the lights. The smell was atrocious. Feral dogs crept underfoot. A filthy young junkie was saying that he hadn't slept in eight days. I persuaded Jason to show me some place where I could roll out a sleeping bag.

He took me up two pitch-black flights of stairs to an attic. The attic was crammed with band equipment—amps, drums, dark crates, and consoles. Left alone, I poked around and found a closet-like room with no door but with a mattress jammed under the eaves. I lay down there and tried to sleep. There was an intermittent party roar from downstairs, and it began to increase in volume. Every few minutes, a dog would bark in the yard, and an instant later a raw young female voice would scream, in a wounded childish tone, "Fuck you!" At one point, Richie came upstairs and burst into my

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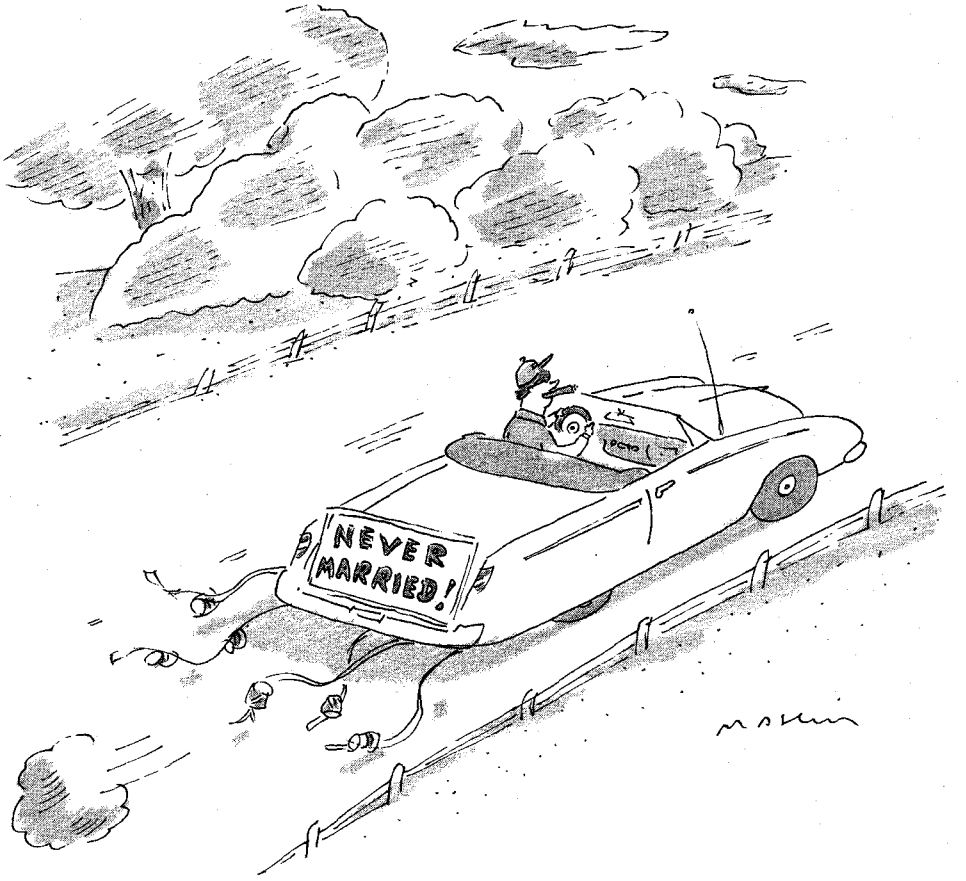
closet. I could see, in the yellow street light seeping through a window, that he was bare-chested. He said that I was missing all the fun—that "these are the coolest people I've met on this tour so far!" Seeing that I was unmoved, Richie returned to the fray. Fleas started biting my shins.

The coolest people he had met so far: I kept trying to get my mind around this notion. Cooler than 88 Fingers Louie? Cooler than sweet, poker-faced Dave, with his Vespa and his Japanese videos? If the punk underground contains a broad spectrum of sensibility, this household seemed to stand at one end—the ravaged, malefic, criminal end. Was its brand of lowlife part of the attraction of punk for nice kids from Montana? Did our hosts possess some Rabelaisian charm that I was just too tired and cranky to appreciate?



Some of the Sputniks finally decided to call it a night. I heard Grady trying to find floor space among the stacks of amps out in the main part of the attic. Chad, I gathered, had gone to sleep in the van, as a security precaution. The riot downstairs got louder. People stormed out into the yard, bellowing oaths. Glass shattered. I kept expecting neighbors to call the police—though neighborhoods with many undocumented immigrants don't call the police lightly. Perhaps the neighbors were waiting for gunfire, which began to seem not unlikely. The shouting and wailing and roaring became ominous, almost hysterical.

Then I heard somebody come crashing up the stairs. There was scuffling just outside my closet, an oath—the intruder had awakened Grady. An unfamiliar, very drunk voice demanded, "Are you the journalist guy?" Grady said he wasn't. His inquisitor didn't believe him. They argued, incoherently, for a while, the intruder demanding to know, if Grady wasn't "the journalist guy," where he was. Grady fended him off, carefully keeping his voice good-natured. Finally, my would-be assailant—or maybe he just wanted to be interviewed—got bored and crashed back down the stairs. Grady, to whom I now felt deeply indebted, seemed to manage to get back to sleep quickly. I lay and waited for dawn, feeling old. Eventually, the revelry downstairs lost its violent edge, then sputtered and went silent as the birds began to sing.

I FLEW home from Chicago that morning, and I next saw the Sputniks when they passed through New York. They seemed to be in good spirits. They had found somewhere else to stay, they said, after their second Chicago show; the foul punk house had been, they agreed, a bit much. They had played a show in Detroit in a not very exciting bar. In New York, where they had a gig at an East Village club called the Continental, they had a few days to kill. They would be staying with Grady's sister Ali, who had a studio in Chelsea.

I went to the show at the Continental, which is a long, narrow, dim bar on Third Avenue. The Sputniks were last on the evening's bill, and I arrived shortly before their set. The earlier bands, Grady told me, had been just terrible. "Almost like Top Forty bubblegum stuff," he said, grimacing. The bar had been crowded. Now it was nearly cleared of patrons. Only Ali and a few of her friends, a couple of musicians, and two guys Leif knew from Vassar were still on hand.

While the Sputniks set up their equipment, I lamely asked how they liked New York. Richie raved about riding the Cyclone at Coney Island. Zach raved about McSorley's Old Ale House. Grady, I noticed, had not got a rocket ship tattooed on his arm. Chad just looked at me and laughed. Then he clicked his drumsticks and they began to play: "Takeover," "You'll Get Yours," "Don't Fuck with the Syndicate." Ali and a girl friend danced enthusiastically. Richie introduced one of his songs by saying that he didn't care if people thought it was emo. An art rocker standing next to me asked, "What's emo?" Zach broke a string on his bass, causing a lengthy delay. "Sorry, we're having even more mental problems and technical breakdowns than usual," he told the audience. A minute later, he said, "We're probably the most apologetic punk band ever to play in New York City." They played a strange, lovely, warp-speed cover of the reggae standard "No Woman, No Cry." My favorite moment in the Continental show came, though, when the band played "Inhibitions" and all three guitarists turned to face Chad while he sang, "Is there anybody out there? Everybody's too scared to move!" ♦

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THE WORLD OF BUSINESS

THE MAN WHO SWALLOWED CHRYSLER

At Daimler-Benz, Jürgen Schrempp ran a company with an extraordinary history. Now, after pulling off the largest industrial merger ever, the German executive sees a future in Motor City.

BY TIMOTHY W. RYBACK

ONE afternoon early last May, everything was set for what promised to be the biggest industrial merger in history. For more than three months, Jürgen E. Schrempp, the head of Daimler-Benz Aktiengesellschaft, Europe's largest industrial company, and Robert J. Eaton, the head of Chrysler Corporation, America's third-largest automobile manufacturer, had engineered a merger, from which would arise a titan that could compete on better terms with General Motors and Ford, and dwarf the likes of Nissan and Fiat.

To avoid speculation in Chrysler stock (then about half the price of Daimler-Benz shares), Schrempp and Eaton had conducted their negotiations in absolute secrecy. They had met in hotels in Lausanne, London, or New York, and avoided their corporate headquarters. On the phone, they had developed a lingua obscura: "Cleveland" for Chrysler, and "Denver" for Daimler-Benz. Eaton had Korean-made cars parked around Chrysler headquarters, in Auburn Hills, Michigan, to serve as decoys.

By the first week in May, one issue remained unsolved—the company name—and on May 5th, two days before the announcement, Eaton and Schrempp met at the Four Seasons Hotel in midtown Manhattan to work it out. "This was the last and final issue we had to resolve," Schrempp told me not long ago. It was also the most difficult. "Bob insisted that the company name begin with Chrysler. I said to him, 'Look, you have to accept Daimler-Benz-Chrysler.' And he said, 'Jürgen, I cannot do that. It must be Chrysler-Daimler-Benz.'" Having studied some fifty corporate mergers, Schrempp knew that more than one agreement had foundered on the issue of corporate identity. "I was looking desperately for a way out," he recalled. "In deals like this, you need a quid pro quo, so then I made a proposal. If the company name could start with Daimler, I would be willing to sacrifice Benz."

For Schrempp, the sacrifice was not as trivial as it may have sounded to American ears. As a native of Freiburg, a university town in the south German region of Baden, Schrempp felt a deep emotional attachment to Karl Benz, who had developed his Patent-Motorwagen in 1885, at virtually the same time that Gottlieb Daimler, in the neighboring region of Swabia, was making his own Motorkutsche. For the rest of the world, the name Daimler-Benz AG may stand for a successful 1926 fusion of two quality German enterprises, but for the people of Baden and Swabia it refers to two separate entities. "Today, people working in our Gaggenau plant go to work for Benz—not for Daimler-Benz," Schrempp says. "People in Sindelfingen and here in Stuttgart work for Daimler. Anyone outside Germany would not understand, but for us it is a highly emotional issue." Even at corporate headquarters, in Stuttgart, your allegiance is known: you are either a "Daimler" or a "Benzer."

Eaton told Schrempp that he could live with this compromise, but that he needed to discuss it with the Chrysler board. Schrempp then returned to Stuttgart, and weighed the implications of this "betrayal" of "Papa Benz" for himself and for millions of other inhabitants of Baden. He knew that, regardless of the corporation's new name, the Mercedes-Benz passenger vehicle—Daimler-Benz's signature product line, named, it is said, after the daughter of an early patron—would keep Karl Benz's name in the public consciousness. On his arrival in Stuttgart, Schrempp discussed his decision with his family and several close friends. The following day, on May 6th, Eaton called Schrempp and they finished the deal. "We agreed that we had both given up something," Schrempp says. "He the sequence, and I the name Benz."

On Thursday, May 7th, Schrempp and Eaton met in London to announce the merger that combined Chrysler's thirty-eight-billion-dollar asset base with Daimler-Benz's fifty-four billion dollars. The *Wall Street Journal*, which had broken the story the previous day, called the merger "staggering." It would represent, the *Journal* said, the "biggest industrial merger of all time," reshaping the automobile industry and setting the stage for other possible industrial mergers. For Schrempp, who is reputed to be among the most calculating and acquisitive businessmen on the European continent, it was a triumph. On November 17th, when the first DaimlerChrysler shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange, it will be what one Standard & Poor's official calls a "pathbreaking" development—the first "globally registered stock," trading on nineteen exchanges worldwide. It also represents the culmination of a three-year struggle waged by Schrempp to revive Daimler-Benz and put the company into the race for a major global presence in the commercial transportation market.

A TWENTY-MINUTE drive southwest of Stuttgart, in the Swabian hill town of Moringen, is the corporate headquarters of Daimler-Benz Aktiengesellschaft. A series of three-to-six-story sandstone-and-glass buildings connected by walkways and lawns, the complex could easily be mistaken for a prosperous community-college campus, if it weren't for an Olympian-size

KATZ/MATRIX

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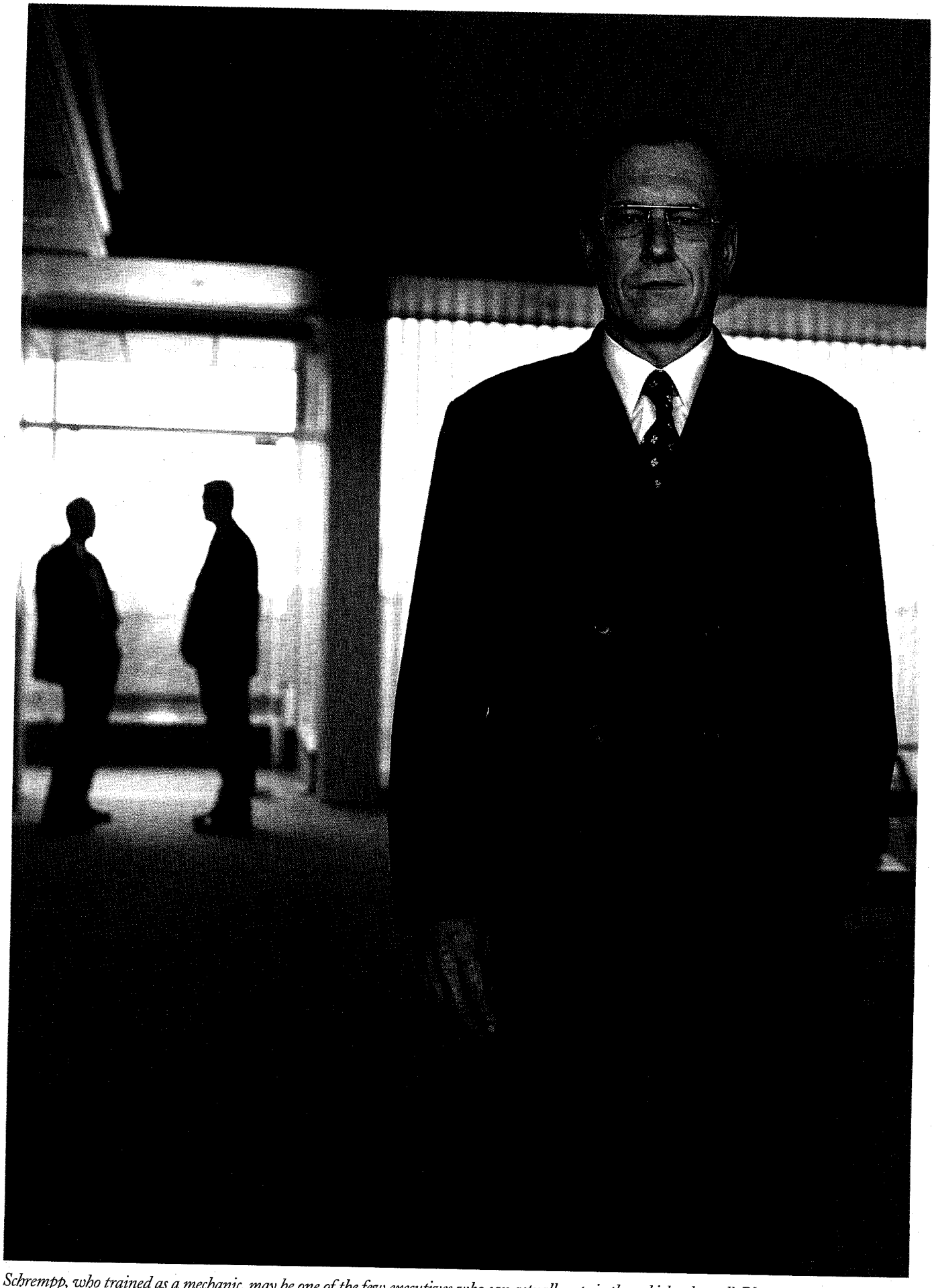

Schrempp, who trained as a mechanic, may be one of the few executives who can actually repair the vehicles they sell. Photograph by Steve Pyke.

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Mercedes star rotating atop the highest building.

Three years from now, when, under the terms of the merger, Eaton will retire, the fate of an estimated hundred and twenty thousand Chrysler jobs will be determined here—specifically, in an office on the top floor of the Gottlieb Daimler/Karl Benz Haus, which represents the future seat of power of DaimlerChrysler AG. Occupying the southwest corner, the office is a bright, airy space set with vitrines displaying models of cars, trucks, planes, jets, helicopters, rockets, and satellites that the company has produced.

Schrempp, who will lead the new company, has been described as Germany's Rambo, because of his sometimes merciless image; and as Neutron Jürgen, a nickname borrowed from General Electric's Neutron Jack Welch, whose corporate restructuring obliterated labor forces but left the factories standing. Schrempp, on being warned by a colleague that the Daimler-Benz corporate headquarters was a snake pit, responded, "And I am the king of the snakes."

Since Schrempp assumed the chairmanship of Daimler-Benz AG, in May of 1995, he has radically restructured the company, dissolving entire divisions and cutting tens of thousands of jobs. Schrempp, whose disdain for corporate bureaucracy is widely known—before he became chairman, he once referred to company headquarters as the "bullshit castle"—cut the administrative staff from twelve hundred to three hundred. The former Daimler-Benz chief Edzard Reuter has described his successor's management style as one of "ruthless brutality," and Schrempp does not deny that he has made tough, sometimes unpopular decisions—German workers threatened with layoffs once took to the streets with a cardboard coffin bearing the words "Gravedigger Schrempp"—but he insists that when an executive acts in the best interest of a company he is also acting in the interest of its employees. Invoking the example of G.E.'s Jack Welch, Schrempp recalls, "At one point, I wanted to steal two executives from him. They were extremely loyal to him. They said, 'Look, this guy is fair. He is tough, but he is fair.' "

For several weeks last summer, when Chrysler and Daimler-Benz withdrew from public view to allow their executives, lawyers, accountants, and even their engineers to work out the final aspects of the agreement, I spent some time with Schrempp in the United States, Canada, and Europe. What struck me most about him was that this German executive, who speaks fluent English and is viewed in Europe as having all the characteristics of a typical American C.E.O., seems utterly European when viewed in an American context. Compared with the Kansas-bred ease of Chrysler's Eaton, Schrempp can appear stiff and formal. There is little hint of the man who, shortly after assuming the Daimler-Benz chairmanship, made headlines across Germany when he was detained by Italian police following a late-night romp in Rome. One leading daily chided him, "How old are you? Fifty. Herr Schrempp!"

Three years later, Schrempp is every inch the company man. On the day we met in his Stuttgart office, he was wearing standard corporate dress: charcoal-gray suit, starched white shirt, wing-tipped shoes, and gold cufflinks. However, in place of his signature glasses—sleek frameless lenses that have the rhomboid angularity of rear-passenger-seat windows—he had on a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles that lent him a softer, paternal air.

Schrempp was in good spirits. He had just returned from a meeting with Eaton in New York. He was proud that less than seven months after they began work on the merger there appeared to be no major problems in sight. Nevertheless, he was cautious. He conceded that the "soft issues" of corporate culture could be more difficult to overcome than the merger's "technical issues." The dual corporate monarchy of Schrempp and Eaton is intended to ease this process. "Many analysts say a company can't be run by two people," Schrempp said. "We both agree. For a long time, it's impossible, but for a critical time, during the first three years"—before Eaton steps down—"when soft issues play a greater role than hard issues—when he has got his people and his people believe in him . . . whenever he says something they will trust him."

Schrempp will be doing the same thing in Stuttgart, acclimating his German colleagues to American corporate ethics. "I introduced last year, for the first time in Germany, the participation of every worker at the company in operating profit," he told me. "Be-

"Surprise me."

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fore that, there was no equivalent in Germany for operating profit. Before that, they could hardly pronounce it. Now when I walk around they say, 'Hey, Schrempp, what do you think the operating profit will be this year?' They are performance-minded." And while Daimler-Benz employees will come to understand the personal costs and benefits of the corporate bottom line, Chrysler employees should come to learn, if not pronounce, the four most important syllables in German corporate life: *Mitbestimmung*—co-determination—the idea that management and labor have an equal number of seats on the supervisory board, that management has to listen to labor before making major strategic decisions, and that labor will share responsibility for the well-being of the company.

"You can still go over the river and through the woods, but it's cheaper to fly."

"You can imagine," Schrempp said, "when we decided to create a Daimler-Chrysler Aktiengesellschaft, a co-determined company, my American friends said, 'Can you run a company like that?' And I said to them, 'Talk to the people representing labor sitting on the board. The inside people are very dedicated to the company.' We had hellish discussions on getting issues resolved, but always in the spirit of what is good for the company." The process of *Mitbestimmung*, Schrempp claims, can resolve these issues before they reach the flash point, as they did recently with the General Motors strike. "I never had one issue where I did not get a hundred-per-cent board approval, even from labor," he said. Given the vast power wielded by unions in Germany, this is no small claim. To insure American labor representation, Schrempp noted that the United Auto Workers will have a seat on the DaimlerChrysler supervisory board. "That means you have to take them seriously," he said. "You have to take the time. You have to spend nights with them. You have to argue your case." He paused, drew on a cigarette (he is a chain-smoker), and added, "You're not going to get it if you just shoot from the hip."

Jack Laskowski, the U.A.W. vice-president responsible for Chrysler, believes he has discovered a level of trust between labor and management in Europe which does not exist in the United States. Laskowski has been to Europe several times since the merger was announced, and says, "It is amazing to me that in Europe the corporations appear to feel that they have a moral obligation to their employees, but also to their community where they are located. These are things that just seem to come naturally in the European culture, while here in America we work hard to establish this and in a lot of instances have failed miserably."

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JÜRGEN SCHREMPP may well be one of the few automobile executives who can actually repair the vehicles they sell. ("I never forget that I started my career under a truck," he says of his first years as an apprentice mechanic at Daimler-Benz.) His father, an administrator at the Albert-Ludwigs University, in Freiburg, had expected more out of his son when, in the sixties, he enrolled him in the Rotteck Gymnasium, the prerequisite schooling for a university education. Though Schrempp demonstrated exceptional aptitude in mathematics, he showed an equally impressive lack of interest in learning. He failed French and was held back a year. Eventually, he left the Gymnasium to pursue a technical education.

Schrempp began an apprenticeship at the Mercedes-Benz dealership in Freiburg, which was run by Karl Nordmann, a former Luftwaffe pilot, who later served as chairman of Mercedes-Benz of North America. Schrempp quickly came to the attention of Nordmann, who became a mentor. In 1970, with Nordmann's encouragement, Schrempp moved to corporate headquarters, and there, for the next four years, he worked in the service-vehicle division. In 1974, at age twenty-nine, Schrempp was promoted to deputy manager and was transferred to the Mercedes-Benz office in Pretoria. Except for a two-year hiatus as manager of the company's ailing Euclid truck plant, near Cleveland, Ohio, Schrempp remained in South Africa for a decade, and in 1985 he became the head of Mercedes-Benz of South Africa. In the early nineteen-eighties, as apartheid laws tightened and many companies abandoned the country, Daimler-Benz had made the controversial decision to remain.

Schrempp openly violated apartheid standards—despite the concerns of some Daimler-Benz senior executives—and insisted on equal pay and treatment for blacks and "coloreds." "When I was in South Africa, I learned that I was there not only to make money," Schrempp says. "I was rather

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young then, but I learned that as the chief executive of a company you have a political responsibility, you have a responsibility to society." Two years ago, Schrempp, who still maintains a residence in South Africa, launched SAFRI—Southern African Initiative of German Business—to promote German investment in South Africa and its neighboring countries. "We owe our thanks to people like Jürgen who hold our country close to their hearts," Nelson Mandela said during SAFRI's inaugural meeting in Berlin in April of 1996. "It is their passion which champions the cause of Africa."

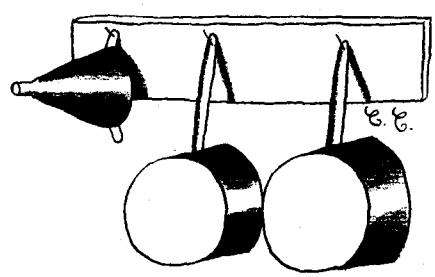
In 1987, Edzard Reuter was appointed chairman of Daimler-Benz AG, and, in a move to create a leading "integrated-technology company," expanded Daimler-Benz into an array of activities, which included financial services, building satellites, manufacturing refrigerators, and constructing diesel engines for tanks. Schrempp had impressed Reuter and Gerhard Liener, then head of commercial vehicles for Daimler-Benz, and was offered a chance to lead a multibillion-dollar aerospace program. Schrempp, though, declined, saying that he was an *Automobilmann* and wanted to remain one. When Daimler-Benz approached Schrempp a second time, however, he accepted; in 1989, he began his new assignment.

Schrempp's initial instinct may have been right. Daimler-Benz had a majority interest in Dornier, which produced bombers for the Luftwaffe, and today specializes in space and medical technology, as well as in aircraft. In 1991, in a move to fill a large gap in the commercial-aircraft part of the company, Schrempp acquired Fokker NV, the legendary Dutch aerospace manufacturer. But Schrempp's expansion paralleled a general downturn in the aircraft market and a huge drop in the dollar against the mark; by 1994, the company's aerospace division—now called Deutsche Aerospace AG, or Dasa—was running a billion-dollar-a-year deficit.

Despite Dasa's poor performance, Reuter championed Schrempp as his successor, and in June of 1994 the supervisory board appointed Schrempp the next Daimler-Benz chairman, though he did not assume the role until the following spring. At that time, Helmut Werner headed Mercedes-Benz, the most lucrative of the company's thirty-five divisions, and many had expected Werner to lead the company. When Schrempp transformed Daimler-Benz from a holding company into primarily a manufacturing company, giving the chairman direct control over Mercedes-Benz, Werner decided to quit. "My friend Helmut Werner was a good man," Schrempp told *Fortune* late last year, "but the structure was wrong."

Actually, more than the structure was wrong with Daimler-Benz. Reuter, apparently, had been overoptimistic about the performance of his "integrated-technology company." In June of 1995, for the first time in Daimler-Benz history, the management issued a "profit warning." The warning was followed less than two months later by a shocking accusation: Gerhard Liener, who had become Reuter's chief financial officer, drafted a seventy-six-page statement, written in the form of a letter, revealing his belief that Reuter, concerned more about his own image than about the welfare of Daimler-Benz, had relied on Liener to cook the books in order to cover up the company's problems. A copy of this document found its way into the editorial offices of the Hamburg-based magazine *Manager*, which printed excerpts from it. Several months later, Liener, who suffered from clinical depression, hanged himself, in his home, outside Munich.

By the end of 1995, Europe's largest industrial corporation reported nearly four billion dollars in losses and restructuring charges. Few companies in corporate history had ever accrued an annual loss of such magnitude. Schrempp scrambled to salvage Daimler-Benz. In what seemed to be a response to Liener's letter, Schrempp adopted American accounting standards, opening up company records to more intense public scrutiny. At the same time, he liquidated, sold, or restructured as many unprofitable or marginal divisions as possible. For the restructuring of Dasa, which was nicknamed Dolores—the Spanish word for "pains"—he reorganized Dornier and let Fokker slip into bankruptcy. He also dismantled AEG, the venerable German electronics giant, selling it off unit by unit, and divested Daimler's twenty-four-per-cent interest in Cap Gemini, a French software-services company. For the surviving divisions of Daimler, Schrempp established a twelve-per-cent profit margin; any division not meeting that goal would be cut. By January of 1996, the company, reduced from thirty-five divisions to twenty-three, began to resemble the company that Daimler and Benz had envisioned when they first joined forces, back in 1926, using Daimler's 1909 logo: a three-pointed star with two tips pointing earthward and one skyward, over the adage "*Zu Land, zu Wasser, und in der Luft*"—"By land, by sea, and in the air."



"When I started, in 1995, shareholders were nothing in this company," Schrempp recalls. "I phoned senior executives at ten o'clock in the morning and asked them what the stock price was. Seven didn't know it. Three were wrong. So I introduced the notion of 'shareholder value' here in Germany, and you know how it was interpreted? Bloody Rambo. Short-term thinker. Ruthless capitalist." But Schrempp brought results. By July of 1996, the company reported a midyear operating profit of eight hundred and thirty million Deutsche marks, or about five hundred and fifty million dollars. A year later, the profit margin had doubled. Amid these encouraging signs, Daimler-Benz prepared to challenge Volkswagen's dominance of the economy-class car market in Europe with a new product, the A-Class, which had been designed before Schrempp took the helm. Over the years, Mercedes-Benz, the passenger-vehicle division of Daimler-Benz, had established itself in the high-end automobile market, offering cars with an alphabet soup of classifications. ("At one point, the combination of letters may have had some meaning to people," a Mercedes-Benz spokesman con-

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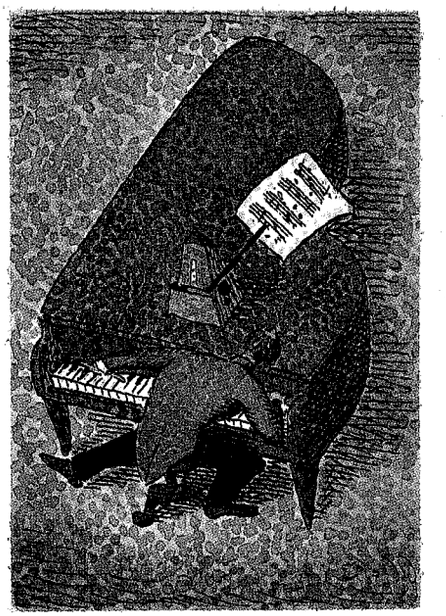
videotapes to prove it. According to one Daimler-Benz insider, the footage shows three of Europe's most popular economy-class vehicles, each with a test driver and with a life-size dummy designed to register the impact of car crashes on the human body. In each case, the vehicle accelerates to approximately forty-five m.p.h., then drives through an obstacle course of traffic cones. After the first or second turn, all three cars go up on two wheels and then into a roll. On one popular model, the windshield supports—known as A-columns—give way, crushing the front-seat passenger.

Schrempp watched the video, and then ordered that it be locked in the corporate vault. "The issue is the quality of Daimler-Benz's products, not the competition's," he reportedly told his staff. "We have our own homework to do." The Daimler-Benz team eventually presented Schrempp with three possible scenarios for responding to the A-Class crisis.

The company could ignore the problem, which was not restricted to Daimler-Benz vehicles. Or it could acknowledge the defect and offer to retrofit the Baby Benz by replacing the tires and installing E.S.P., an electronic stabilizing program generally reserved for Mercedes's high-end models. The third option was to stop delivery and reëngineer the car, lowering the chassis and thereby reducing the center of gravity, and, for additional security, outfitting it with wider tires and E.S.P. This final scenario would halt sales and marketing for three months and cost the company an estimated hundred and sixty-eight million dollars. After reviewing the options with Daimler-Benz board members, automotive sales and marketing experts, and trusted friends—the latter over a glass of wine at his home—Schrempp decided to postpone delivery of the A-Class and reëngineer the car.

Schrempp's decision was initially met with anger and skepticism. Dealers feared lost Christmas sales. Design experts claimed that it was unrealistic to rebuild the vehicle and have it back in production in such short order. While Daimler-Benz line workers at one of the plants took an extended holiday, the company's executives and engineers put



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in overtime. When I asked one executive how the A-Class crisis had affected his Christmas holiday, he replied, "What Christmas holiday?"

Last February, as had been promised, Daimler-Benz took the A-Class back to market, and invited leading automobile journalists, including the Swede who had first administered the moose test, to test-drive the vehicle in Córdoba, Spain. The car won high praise. *Barron's* called the Baby Benz rebound "one of the best damage control efforts since Johnson & Johnson and the Tylenol scare." Schrempp sees the A-Class crisis as a strategic triumph. "We put ourselves ahead of our competitors. We have set a new standard of safety for this class of car. The competition will now have to match our standards." Propped up between two computers on Schrempp's desk is a large stuffed animal with big, floppy antlers and a smile.

BOTH in Stuttgart and in Auburn Hills in recent months, one encountered the phrase "merger of equals" at every turn. "We have fashioned a true merger of equals," Chrysler's Eaton declared last May. Christoph Walther informed me in Stuttgart, "Volkswagen took over Rolls-Royce and BMW took over Rover, but this is a merger of equals." And a proxy statement dispatched last August to Chrysler and Daimler-Benz shareholders referred explicitly to a "merger of equals." Last week, in a joint press release, Eaton and Schrempp reiterated that "from the beginning . . . this was a merger of equals."

But outsiders have a different view. "There is no such thing as a merger of equals or unequals," says Peter Schmidt, who tracks auto-industry mergers for Automotive Industry Data, an analysis group that watches the European market. "There is always one dominant partner in any corporate relationship." If this is a merger of equals, says John Lawson, an auto-industry analyst at Salomon Smith Barney, why would Bob Eaton agree to retire as co-C.E.O. after three years and leave Jürgen Schrempp with complete control? And why has the new company been domiciled in Germany, rather than in the United States? Schrempp and Eaton insist that they've chosen Germany because the tax advantages, among other benefits, are greater there than in the United States. Apart from that, they insist, DaimlerChrysler will be a global corporation, one that will combine Chrysler's profitability—triple that of its German partner—with Daimler-Benz's quality. As Schrempp puts it, the company will embrace a corporate ethic situated "somewhere in the Atlantic, possibly closer to America than to Europe, but definitely not in the United States."

John Lawson observes, "I think the two managements in a strange way are welcoming this culture clash, because they see it as necessary to make some changes on both sides." Lawson spoke of Chrysler's "near-death" experience, referring to the company's brush with bankruptcy in 1979, and its resuscitation with the help of a federal bailout; Chrysler, he said, received "a jolt to the system" which has made it a more "meritocratic company" that is "lighter on its feet" than this "lumbering, like German machine." One re: the merged culture, Lawson be is that American executives ma to adjust themselves to more n European "compensation struct There is a two-year moratoriu executive salaries at Chrysle Schrempp refuses to comment at on his plans. But, when a reporte fronted Schrempp with the fac last year Eaton earned seven what he did, the Daimler-Benz man responded, "I didn't realize was living on the poverty line."

ONE day last summer, I aske ton if he thought that h would remember him as the cor executive who sold one of Am most profitable corporations t Germans. We were sitting in his at Chrysler's Auburn Hills head ters, a large room filled with mem from employees and photograp

IT WAS AUTUMN

When my uncle came home from Burma
he had a little blue scar beside
his right eye. "That was where the bullet
came out," he'd laugh, and when I asked
where it went in he'd open his mouth,
point a long forefinger down his throat:
"Right there, we learned to eat everything."
Some days his given name was Nathan,
Nathan Hale, others Nathaniel Hawthorne.
No, he hadn't forgotten his name.
A grown man did not forget his name.
Under the grape arbor in August
Uncle with his morning tea and milk,
a warm wind trembling the flat leaves.
He would stare up at the fruit hanging
in thick black clusters while slowly
sucking at his first unlit cigar.
"By eight the night was dark as that,
then it got darker." He'd flick the fruit
with the dry end and bare his stained teeth
in a huge smile without the least mirth.
The afternoons would grow so hot we'd
sleep for hours in a strange dream of sleep
to waken to the house chattering
in the evening breeze. I'd hear him
stumbling barefoot through the empty rooms
in search of something or someone he
would never name. The long days passed
into another season that brought

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down the fruit in bunches. Bowed by rust
and their own great weight the sunflowers
came back to earth. At dusk the sky bled
in the west, blood shot through the dry leaves
of the alder and the oak, blood fell
from nowhere and puddled in the pale grass
until I thought the days would never end.
"It was autumn," Uncle said, squatting
by the unlocked door to the toolshed.
"It was the beginning of autumn,
the little noiseless Asian rains poured
their waters down on us until we
slept on duty in our wet uniforms
leaning into each other like kittens.
A man alone would walk off the road
into an open field to find his sleep."
That afternoon he made a phone call
to someone, I could tell, he did not
know and chanted in a secret voice
that floated from room to room for hours.
Though no one came for Uncle he dressed
in his one good suit, with the dark stripe,
his good white shirt starched and buttoned
at the throat. The little scar pulsed
beside the one blind eye filled with blood
while the other stared at nothing that
was there until the day's last light failed,
the room stilled, and we entered the past.

—PHILIP LEVINE

his wife and two children. On a coffee table was a sculpture of a ram, by the American artist Marshall Fredericks, a color brochure for Chrysler's Dodge Viper, and a children's book, "Goldilocks and the Three SUVs"—about a young girl's adventures with the new Dodge Durango sport-utility vehicle. For a corporate C.E.O. in the midst of the largest industrial merger ever, Eaton, in shirtsleeves, seemed disarmingly casual.

There had been lots of merger-related news that week. Just the previous day, the European Union had approved the merger, cementing DaimlerChrysler's legal status in Western Europe; a team of Daimler-Benz engineers and executives had met their Chrysler counterparts in Auburn Hills, to discuss issues ranging from letterhead to transmission parts; and virtually every newspaper in America was reporting that the Securities and Exchange Commission had launched an investigation of possible insider trading just before the merger was announced. "We've gotten clearance from the S.E.C.," Eaton declared with the breezy confidence of the unimpeachable. (Schrempp is reported as saying that "there was no indication something was possibly wrong.")

When I asked Eaton about the genesis of the Daimler-Chrysler merger, he recounted a dreary day last January when Schrempp sat on his sofa ("right where you are sitting") and, in about seventeen minutes ("one of the shortest meetings in history"), outlined his vision for the fusion of their two companies. "We were in discussion with other people, as was Daimler," Eaton recalled. Eight months earlier, at the annual management meeting for Chrysler, Eaton had distributed copies of "A Perfect Storm," Sebastian Junger's best-seller, which describes the fate of a fishing boat sunk when three storm fronts converged off the Massachusetts coast. Eaton had seen "three storm fronts" converging on the automobile industry—changes in retail practices such as Internet car purchases, overcapacity in the industry, and the threat of global economic crisis—and could foresee an acceleration of consolidations. "Twenty years ago, there were forty independent automobile companies," Eaton said. "Currently, there are about twenty. In another five to ten years, there will be, at most, five to seven large transportation companies." He named Ford, G.M., Volkswagen, and Toyota, then added, "DaimlerChrysler will be one of them."

In contrast to the recent German takeover of Rolls-Royce, whose assets were divided up on a golf course in Bavaria—Volkswagen got the manufacturing plant and BMW the trophy RR logo—the Daimler-Benz-Chrysler merger was intended, according to both Schrempp and Eaton, to capitalize on the "synergies" of two financially robust companies, but through an evolutionary process. When I mentioned that some analysts viewed the merger as a buyout, Eaton insisted that the numbers told a different story. "We still remain in many ways more American than Ford or General Motors," he said, walking me into a wonderland of line graphs, bar graphs, and pie charts. "In the new company, seventy per cent of our total vehicles will be produced in North America, versus Ford, which produces only sixty-four per cent of theirs in North America. And in the case of G.M. it is sixty-two per cent."

According to Eaton, the shareholder base tells an equally American tale. In the newly merged company, forty-six per cent of this base will be in the United States, with only thirty-five per cent in Germany and the balance in other countries, primarily in Western Europe. "Of the original Chrysler holders, those people with shares in Chrysler will own forty-four per cent of the new company," Eaton said. "But there are a lot of people in the United States who hold Daimler-Benz shares as well, and not an awful lot in Europe who hold Chrysler. That's how you get the United States being the largest shareholder of the new company."

Last month, Standard & Poor's Fi-

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nancial Information Services, which produces the S. & P. 500 Index, announced that it would not include DaimlerChrysler, because the new entity was domiciled in Germany. "The criteria we have established for the index is that the headquarters of a corporation is one of the primary considerations whether we decide to include a company in the index or not," James Branscome, an S. & P. senior vice-president for investment-advisory services, told me. "It was clear to the index committee in its evaluation, including a meeting with Mr. Schrempp and Mr. Eaton and their aides, that this is, in fact, a corporation headquartered in Germany." Branscome paused and added, "It's DaimlerChrysler AG, not Inc., right?" Ford and General Motors have been forced to disband the American Automobile Manufacturers Association—the powerful Washington-based lobby—because Chrysler is no longer "American." Automobile-industry insiders, as well as the popular press, have begun referring to G.M. and Ford as the Big Two.

Nevertheless, most observers feel that Eaton has struck a brilliant deal by marrying Chrysler to Daimler-Benz. "The real triumph of Daimler has been the creation and nurturing of a brand and working out what is needed in order to sustain that," John Lawson says. "Daimler is the biggest industrial corporation in Germany, and yet it has got this sky-high reputation around the globe in terms of its engineering excellence. I think for a niche player to achieve this is one thing, but for a company of Daimler's size to have managed to maintain that superb reputation for quality is something it can be proud of and it will be able to export to Chrysler."

Eaton's personal stake in the deal is enormous, and, amid the statistics and pie charts, he failed to mention his cut. Eaton will reportedly receive cash and stock worth $69.6 million and future rights to stock worth two hundred and thirty-nine million dollars.

As I was leaving Chrysler headquarters, I passed a framed poster of the logo for the new company—"DaimlerChrysler Aktiengesellschaft"—which had been signed in black marker by Schrempp and Eaton. The poster (with the name Chrysler stranded between all those Teutonic syllables) set off a number of associations, in particular the memory of late 1979, when Chrysler almost went out of business—plagued not only by poor management but also by new federal regulations and the effects of the Arab oil boycott. Several months later, when Chrysler was saved by government loan guarantees worth $1.5 billion, the controversial move was defended by a Congress that believed in the importance of a strong domestic automotive industry. I remembered television spots of Lee A. Iacocca, his Burberry flapping in the wind, urging Americans to buy American, and thought how odd it was that American taxpayers had saved this company, only to have it sold to the Germans.

After the merger announcement last spring, there was an outpouring of congratulations all around. Some, from competitors, were grudging; others were euphoric. Lehman Brothers' corporate-finance chief, Ruggero Magnoni, called it "the most fantastic industrial amalgamation mankind has ever experienced." Other people were less enthusiastic. In an interview in the *Wall Street Journal*, Cynthia Ozick observed that she avoided German products as a "private memorial" to Holocaust victims, and now, following the Daimler-Chrysler merger, she "wouldn't touch" a Chrysler product. "This is irrational and not particularly moral," Ozick admitted. "But I have to make some marker in my life."

The merger left a good many Americans feeling that way, especially Jews. It is different in Israel, says Benjamin Navon, a Holocaust survivor who served as Israel's Ambassador to Germany from 1988 to 1993, and is currently a representative of the Daimler-Benz office in Jerusalem. "Since the restitutions were made by the German government to the state of Israel in the nineteen-fifties, the taboo on German products has started to crumble," Navon told me when we spoke by telephone recently. Navon notes that most taxis in Israel are Mercedes-Benzes.

Today, like it or not, buying American often means buying German. Otto-Versand, the Hamburg-based catalogue-merchandising giant, owns both Eddie Bauer and Spiegel. The German food giant Tengelmann Group bought the A. & P. grocery-store chain almost two decades ago. With the recent acquisition of Random House, Bertelsmann AG now owns thirty per cent of the American consumer-trade book market (including Alfred A. Knopf, Ms. Ozick's publisher). And Daimler-Benz—which entered the American market with William Steinway's purchase, in 1888, of the Daimler patent for North America and the construction, seventeen years later, of the first German "motor car" in his Long Island piano factory—now commands more than thirty per cent of the American heavy-trucking industry. Daimler-Benz products power San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit system, the new monorail at the Newark International Airport, and the new Staten Island ferry. "More than one-third of everything transported by [long-haul] truck in the United States today is transported by a Daimler-Benz product," Schrempp says.

The company once moved a similar proportion of the Third Reich. During the Second World War, Daimler-Benz was the largest supplier of aircraft engines for the Luftwaffe, and a significant consumer of forced, prisoner-of-war labor. It also "leased" thousands of concentration-camp inmates and *Arbeitsjuden*—Jews intended to be used for labor rather than exterminated at once—through local S.S. offices and government agencies for as little as three marks per day.

Daimler-Benz had been a favorite manufacturer of the Nazi leadership. Hitler bought his first Mercedes-Benz in the early twenties from Jakob Werlin, the head of the Mercedes dealership in Munich. Werlin, who died in 1965, recalled that his dealership was in the building where the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the official paper of the Nazi Party, was printed, and that whenever Hitler visited the printing plant he would stop by to discuss the latest Mercedes-Benz models. Hitler, whom Werlin described as a *Mercedesnarr*—a fool for Mercedes—became so obsessed with the brand that, according to one account, while serving a prison sentence following his failed 1923 putsch against the Bavarian government he passed

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his days sketching future designs for Mercedes-Benz vehicles. (No drawings have ever been found.)

Even the most accomplished public-relations officer would be hard-pressed to finesse the Daimler-Benz complicity with the Third Reich, and the company, to its credit, has not tried. "We are very aware of the sensitivities surrounding the company's past," Jeffrey Thinnes, a vice-president of Daimler-Benz's Washington, D.C., office, told me. "When the merger was announced, there was obvious concern about the whole issue of the company's Nazi past. We hoped our postwar record and our continuing efforts would speak for themselves." Abraham H. Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League, has been following the way Daimler-Benz has dealt with its Nazi-era legacy, and he told me, "The people running the company today are not the same people who were running it fifty years ago. I think the most important thing is to see how the current executive leadership confronted it. And there Daimler-Benz comes off better than most. Early on, they confronted their history. Early on, they owned up to what they are about." In 1985, Daimler-Benz opened its archive without restriction, and has now paid more than twenty-five million Deutsche marks in reparations to Jewish organizations. The company also established a program to identify and communicate with victims, and constructed a memorial to slave laborers at the entrance to the former Daimler-Benz corporate headquarters, in Untertürkheim, a Stuttgart neighborhood.

THIS summer, I accompanied Schrempp on his first trip to Cleveland since 1984—when he departed after being dispatched to save the Daimler-Benz subsidiary in Euclid. (After two years there, Schrempp decided to close it down.) This time, he was back to celebrate the rollout of a new Daimler-Benz truck, the Sterling, produced by the Sterling Truck Corporation, a Daimler-Benz subsidiary created in early 1997.

The headquarters of Sterling Truck, just outside Cleveland, are decorated with Oriental carpets and etchings of English hunting scenes. On one wall in the lobby, a print shows Benjamin Franklin presenting his credentials to King George at the Court of St. James's. A generously stocked cigar bar, set out for the occasion, occupied a corner of the room.

We were seated inside an enormous pavilion—a tent pitched between two wings of the office complex. As we spoke, musicians raised their bows to strike the first note of a Mozart minuet, and, as the music rose, it met a summer tempest beating on the fabric roof and the walls. With a glass of red wine in one hand and a Marlboro cigarette in the other, Schrempp spoke fondly of life in Cleveland, and of an impending alpine climb with the legendary mountaineer Reinhold Messner. Although Schrempp skirted the unresolved issues of the merger, such as the great distance between Chrysler and Daimler-Benz wage scales, he discussed his long-term vision for DaimlerChrysler. Noting that the new company commanded major portions of the automobile and service-vehicle market in Europe, North America, and Latin America, Schrempp said that DaimlerChrysler now possesses the industrial muscle to take on East Asia, and that the economic turmoil in the region presents opportunities that were "unthinkable" just a few years ago. Though Schrempp would not say which companies might be targets for acquisition, John Lawson says that Mitsubishi, with whom Chrysler already has a relationship, and Nissan Diesel, with whom Daimler-Benz is currently "in discussion," are the two companies most likely "to fall prey to a Western predator."

On this evening, however, Schrempp wanted to emphasize that although the product lines will not blur—"A Mercedes will remain a Mercedes," he said, emphatically thumping the table—there will be only one company. To make his point, Schrempp recalled visiting Eaton in Auburn Hills shortly before the merger was made public. Eaton took him on a tour of a Chrysler factory, and let him test-drive a number of vehicles. After taking one car for a spin, Schrempp said to Eaton, "Bob, I want you to listen to my words very carefully. We have a good car here." Schrempp paused, to make certain that his ultimate point had registered. "This is not a buyout. This is not a takeover. This is a merger of equals."

As dinner progressed, the musicians began the second movement of Haydn's String Quartet in C-Major, the famous "Emperor's" quartet, which has provided the melodic undergirding not only to the hymn "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" but also to "Deutschland, Deutschland Über Alles." While rain hammered the roof, Schrempp puffed his cigarette, sipped his wine, and mused on the future of DaimlerChrysler. One could almost see a German giant digesting its latest acquisition. ♦

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SKETCHBOOK
BY GERALD SCARFE

SLYBOOTS

THE artist Gerald Scarfe shares with the late writer Roald Dahl a penchant for whimsy and a dark, devilish streak. Recognizing a match begging to be made, the Los Angeles Opera has brought the two together for the first time, in "Fantastic Mr. Fox" (December 9th to 22nd), a children's opera based on Dahl's book of the same title, with costumes and sets by Scarfe (who also designed the company's 1993 production of "The Magic Flute") and a score by the young American composer Tobias Picker. Dahl's vulpine hero is a beast of operatic dimensions—in his battle to save his family from such pernicious adversaries as Farmer Bunce (at left) he loses his enviable tail—and Scarfe has made him even more dashing. The expansion of the tale by the librettist and director Donald Sturrock includes a love story between a handsome porcupine and a lonely hedgehog, and a character called Rita the Rat, a cider-saturated hippie academic, who pulls herself together and helps save the day. —EMILY NUNN

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RITA STEPS OUT

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FICTION

VARENGEVILLE

Lessons in the aesthetics of betrayal.

BY WILLIAM BOYD

OLIVER frowned darkly and pushed his spectacles back up to the bridge of his nose, taking in his mother's suspiciously bright smile and trying to ignore Lucien's almost sneering, almost leering grimace of pride and self-satisfaction. Lucien was his mother's "friend": Oliver had decided he did not particularly like Lucien.

"What exactly is it?" Oliver said, playing for time.

"I believe people call it a bicycle," Lucien said. Oliver noticed that his mother thought this sally was amusing.

"I know that," Oliver said, patiently, "but why are you giving me a bicycle?"

"It's a present," his mother said. "It's a gift for you, you can go exploring. Say thank you to Uncle Lucien. Really, you're intolerably spoiled."

"Thank you, Lucien," Oliver said. "You are most kind."

THE bicycle was solid, a little too big for him, black, with three gears and lights, and possessed—Oliver admitted he was pleased by this gadget—a small folding-down support that allowed the bike to stand free when it was parked.

However, it did not take long for the purpose of the gift to become evident. Oliver wondered if his mother thought he was really that stupid. Every time Lucien motored over from Deauville, always after lunch (always leaving before six), Oliver's mother would turn to him and say, "Oliver, darling, why don't you cycle into Varengeville and post this letter for me?" She would give him fifty francs and tell him to have a *diabolo menthe* at the café in the square. "Explore," she would further enjoin, vaguely, waving her arms about. "Wander here and there. Wonderful countryside, beaches, trees. The freedom of the open road. Fill your lungs, my darling, fill your lungs."

And Oliver would wearily mount the big black bicycle and pedal off down the road to Varengeville, the letter tucked into his belt. He had a good idea what his mother and Lucien would be doing in his absence—he knew, in fact he was absolutely convinced, that it would involve a lot of kissing—and he was sure his father would not be pleased. He had discovered his mother and Lucien in a kiss on one occasion and had watched them silently, slightly disturbed at the violence, the audible suction with which their mouths fed on each other. Then they had broken apart and his mother had seen him watching. She took him at once into the next room and explained that Maman had been unhappy and Uncle Lucien was simply being kind and had been trying to cheer her up but that it would be best if he didn't tell Papa. They were both instantly aware—Oliver's eyes narrowing—that this explanation was laughably inept, that it did not even begin to undermine the blatant deceit. So she changed tactics and instead made him promise: she extracted one of her most severe and terrifying and implacable promises from him. Oliver knew he would never dare tell Papa.

LUCIEN came two or three times a week, always in the afternoon. Once he came on a Sunday for lunch accompanied by some other friends and a nervy, febrile woman with strange coppery hair who was introduced as his wife. It was early August, and Oliver was beginning doggedly to count the days before he would go back to school in England, to count the days before he would see his father again, conscious all the while that the summer was only half done and that there would be many more cycle trips into Varengeville.

IT was on his sixth or seventh journey into the village that he spotted the old painter. Oliver always took the same route: up the sloping drive to the gates, down the farm lane to the road; then an exhilarating swift downhill freewheel along the hedgerow to the D 75, then right along the cliff road toward Varengeville, with the brilliant ocean, restless and refulgent, on his left, his eyes screwed up behind his spectacle lenses, half blinded by the glare of the afternoon sun.

It was the odd shape of the canvas that attracted his attention first: long and thin, almost like a short plank, screwed into a small easel. The old painter sat absolutely still on a collapsible canvas stool, his arms folded across his breast, staring out to sea, his brushes and paints resting on his knees. Oliver noticed his shock of completely white hair, neatly combed, and, even though the man was sitting, he knew he must be tall and thin.

In Varengeville he posted his mother's letter and then went to the café for his *diabolo*. The café was always quiet in midafternoon, and the surly young waiter, with a new downy mustache on his top lip, listened to his order, served him his drink, accepted his payment, tossed down the change, tore a corner of the receipt, and wandered away, loudly straightening already straight chairs, without a word.

Oliver looked out at the little square and thought about things: his mother and Lucien, for a start; then the scab that was hardening nicely on his elbow; his desire to have a pet of some sort, mammal or reptile, he couldn't decide; the film that his father was making in London. . . . Then he observed, covertly but closely, the rare customers who came and went, and from time to time admired the perfect stolidity of his parked bicycle—canted over somewhat, but resolutely firm on its stand—and noted how the slightly elliptical shadow version of it, angled flat on the pavement, shadow wheels touching real rubber wheels, was both absolutely exact and yet undeniably distorted. The phrase "as faithful as a shadow" came into his head and he thought how true it was, but then wondered, Where did your shadow go when

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the sun wasn't shining? . . . How could something be faithful if you couldn't see it? . . . And then he found his thoughts returning to his mother and Lucien, and he decided he would cycle back as slowly as possible, hoping Lucien would be gone by the time he arrived home and he would not have to encounter him, mysteriously washed and perfumed, a permanent smile on his lips and full of an unfamiliar and repugnant affection for Oliver.

"Are you all right, Monsieur?" Oliver asked softly.

The painter turned slowly around. He had a big rectangular face, its features powerfully present—the nose, the eyes, the thin wide mouth, the absolutely white hair—yet in no way distinctive or handsome; just a strong simple oblong face, Oliver thought, but somehow oddly memorable.

"But of course, young man," the painter said. "Many thanks for asking."

"This happened a long time ago," the painter said in explanation, pointing at his painting.

He began to ask Oliver polite questions. What is your name? Oliver Feverall. How old are you? Almost twelve. Where do you live? Château Les Pruniers, but just for the summer.

"You speak very good French, but you have an English name," the painter observed. Oliver told him that his mother

"He had a good idea what his mother and Lucien would be doing in his absence." Photograph by Henri Cartier-Bresson.

The old painter was still sitting motionless in his field, still staring out at the sea and the coastline. The afternoon had turned hazy, the sky full of spilt-milk clouds, but still glary and dazzling. Coming from the other direction, Oliver could now see what was on the canvas, and as he approached he was surprised to note that it seemed almost black, full of murky blues and dark grays. For an absurd second, as he glanced at the silvered sea with its vast backdrop of sunlit cloud, he wondered if the painter might be blind. And then he wondered if he might be dead. People could die like that suddenly, sitting up, just stiffen into a posture like that—they could, he'd read about it.

Oliver had parked his bicycle and climbed over the fence and approached the painter without seeing any movement in him, aware now that he wasn't in fact dead, but curious about his impressive immobility.

"I thought," Oliver began, "because you weren't painting that—"

"No, I was just refreshing my memory," the painter said. "I just needed to come out here again, in case I had got something wrong."

Oliver looked at the canvas, which showed, as far as he could tell, a ship washed up on a shore in the night. He looked up at the bleached, blinding sky and back at the dark thin canvas.

was French and his father was English. His mother was an actress, she had appeared in half a dozen films, perhaps he knew of her—Fabienne Farde? The painter confessed he did not.

"Perhaps you've heard of my father. He's a famous film director—Denton Feverall?"

"I rarely go to the cinema," the painter said, beginning to pack away his brushes and tubes. As far as Oliver could tell he hadn't added a stroke of color to his grimy canvas, just come outside and stared at it for a couple of hours.

They walked back to the gate that led to the coast road. The painter admired Oliver's bicycle, admired the effi-

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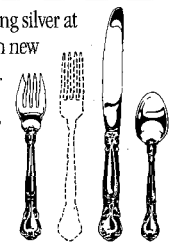

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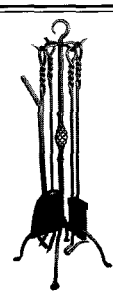

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cacy of its folding-down stand. Oliver tried once more.

"It was given to me by a singer, a famous singer, he's in Deauville for the summer, at the Casino—Lucien Navarro."

"Lucien Navarro, Lucien Navarro," the painter repeated, holding his forefinger erect on his right hand as if calling for silence. Oliver waited. Then, after a while, "No, never heard of him." Oliver shrugged, wondering what kind of reclusive life this man led, who had never heard of Fabienne Farde, Denton Feverall, or Lucien Navarro.

They shook hands, formally, and the painter wished Oliver a good end to the afternoon and thanked him again for his solicitude. Oliver looked back as he cycled away and saw the old man striding down the road, his canvas and easel under one arm, the afternoon sun striking his silver hair and making it flame with light.

LUCIEN had a new car—a Lancia, whose roof came down. Lucien and his Lancia, Oliver thought, a note of disgust coloring his reflections as he cycled off to Varengeville with his mother's letter; Lucien and his Lancia.

Lucien had not visited for some six days, and Oliver had noted that his mother's mood was steadily deteriorating. One morning she did not descend from her bedroom at all; only the maid was allowed access, bringing up all manner of curious drinks. Even Oliver's soft knock on her door in the afternoon produced only the moaned response "Darling, Maman has one of her migraines," and he did not see her at all, he calculated, for a further thirty-seven hours.

And then Lucien was coming, and she was alert and agitated, changing her clothes, shifting vases of flowers about the drawing room, her perfume more noticeably pungent, her affection for Oliver falling upon him suddenly, with brusque, sore hugs and alarming cannonades of kisses and caresses. Oliver looked impassively out of the library windows as Lucien's midnight-blue Lancia crunched dustily to a halt and, for the first time, felt relieved he had to go to Varengeville and post a letter.

But in the village, standing in front of the pale-yellow post box, he felt a sudden flow of anger at his ritual banishment. He tore open the letter—always to his mother's sister in Paris—and, as he knew he would, discovered three perfectly blank sheets of paper. He folded them up, deliberately, slowly, and dropped them in a litter bin by a set of traffic lights. He cycled south out of Varengeville, toward the plateau, heading for Longueuil, not wanting a *diabolo menthe*, wondering how he was going to survive the two and a half weeks of August that were left, wondering how he could go through this pretense, this silly game, each time Lucien arrived. Why didn't she just say she wanted to be alone? He didn't care how long they kissed each other, or whatever else they got up to. He simply wanted summer to be over, he wanted to get back to school, he wanted his father to finish filming "The Stepdaughters of Dracula."

The painter was walking along the road with his usual light burden of easel, folding stool, and long thin canvas. Oliver slowed to a halt and they greeted each other, Oliver noticing that, although the day was hot, the painter was wearing a tweed jacket with a shirt and tie and a curious knitted waistcoat. Old men felt the cold, Oliver remembered, even on the warmest days.

"Where are you going?" the painter asked. Oliver gestured at the flat baking landscape inland. In the enormous sky a fleet of burly white clouds moved slowly along, northward, pushed by a warm southern breeze. A heavy flight of crows crossed the stubble field beside them.

"It's hot out there," the painter said.

"I'm not going anywhere in particular," Oliver said, feeling unfamiliar tears sting his eyes.

"Is everything all right?"

"Yes, absolutely."

"Come home with me," the painter said. "Have a cold drink."

THE painter showed Oliver his studio: it was a large tidy room with a Persian rug hanging on the wall. On an easel was a sizable painting of a blue bird shape against a slate-gray sky. On tables and on the floor were rows of cleaned brushes laid on palettes, and others stuffed into ceramic pots. Small tables held neat rows of tubes of oil paint and on these tables were jars of flowers, many of them dried. Oliver was impressed.

"You must have hundreds of brushes," he said. "Thousands."

"You may be right," said the painter, smiling, placing his small canvas on an

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empty easel and stepping back to contemplate it. Oliver circled around to stare at it, glancing at the picture of the bird and thinking that he, Oliver Feverall, could paint a better-looking bird than that.

This small canvas was a new painting: it looked like a sodden field beneath winter skies, three uneven stripes of brown, green, and gray, the paint thickly smeared but quite dry.

"I'm having real problems," the painter said. "I don't know what to do. I did one like this before and put a plow in it, and it seemed to work."

"What about a man?"

"No. I don't want people in these pictures."

"What about some crows?"

"It's an idea."

As they were going outside to the terrace to have their cold drinks, Oliver heard a woman's voice call out, "Georges? Are you back?" The painter excused himself and went upstairs, returning a minute later.

"It's my wife," he said. "She thinks she's getting the flu."

They sat outside at a metal table under a small canvas awning that provided a neat square of shade and sipped at the cold drinks, fetched by a plump, smiley housekeeper. Oliver was introduced as "Oliver, my English friend," and his hand was shaken. The painter drank mineral water, Oliver an Orangina, and they sat there silently for a while in the relentless afternoon heat staring out at the big solid clouds steaming toward them, northward. Oliver thought that the painter had a sad face and noticed how the lines that ran from his nose to the corners of his mouth were particularly marked, casting, even in this shade, dark sickle shadows.

"It's an interesting idea, that," the painter said. "Crows." He turned to Oliver. "When's your birthday?"

"Next week. Wednesday."

"Come by. We'll have another drink. I'll drink your health. No, I mean it, if you've nothing better to do."

Oliver thanked him. Wednesday was usually a Lucien day—Wednesday and Friday.

They were silent again for a while, together.

"Do you know what a love affair is?" Oliver asked.

"Yes," the painter said, "I certainly do."

"Do you think that if you're married

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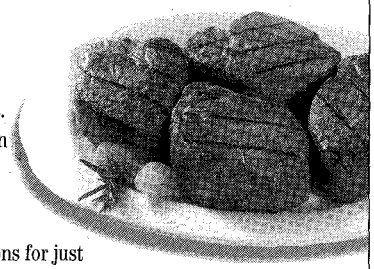

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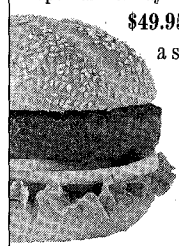

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you should have a love affair with someone else?"

"I don't know," the painter said.

"It's not wrong?"

"It depends." The painter sipped at his mineral water. He held up his glass as if to look at the sky through it. "Sometimes water is the best drink in the world, isn't it?"

He walked Oliver to the road and watched him as he crouched to undo the padlock on the chain that he had threaded through the rear wheel as an anti-theft device.

"Do you think someone will steal your bike?" the painter asked.

"You can't be too careful. In London I've had three bikes stolen."

"But this is Varengeville, not London. Still, it is a splendid machine, isn't it, wonderfully built."

"I wish it had drop handlebars," Oliver said. He kicked up the stand with his left shoe. "I'd better get home," he said. "My mother will be waiting."

"See you on Wednesday," the painter said.

On Oliver's birthday his mother gave him a very crumpled ten-pound note and promised him a proper treat when they returned to London. Oliver said he was going to see a friend in Varengeville and set off up the drive a good half hour before Lucien was due.

The housekeeper was watering some pots of geraniums by the front door as Oliver approached.

"He's not here," she said. "They had to go back to Paris yesterday. Madame has bronchitis, we think."

Oliver pursed his lips and pushed his spectacles up to the bridge of his nose. Damn, he thought, bloody damn. He looked about him, hands on his hips, wondering resentfully what he would do for the rest of the day.

"He's left a present for you," the housekeeper said, disappearing back into the house and reëmerging with a long, thin brown-paper parcel. "He was very insistent you should have this."

Oliver sat on the beach below the small cliff and took his shoes and socks off. He looked at his watch—he needed to stay here for a couple of hours at least. It was annoying that the painter had had to go to Paris.

Oliver allowed himself an audible sigh and looked about, idly. A stout dark girl in a yellow bikini sunbathed some feet away, a small Yorkshire terrier at her side huddling under a bunched towel for shade. Further along, a group of kids sat in a circle around a transistor radio. Toddlers studiously dug in the wet sand at the gentle surf's edge. Oliver thought about his birthday—what could he get for ten pounds?... Maybe Dad will call this evening. He's bound to give me ten pounds, too, maybe more.... He mentally totalled all the potential fiscal gifts that he might receive from his assorted relatives and came up with a satisfyingly large figure. Not such a bad birthday after all, he thought, and unwrapped the painter's present.

It was the wet-fields painting, Oliver was not too surprised to discover. And just what was he supposed to do with it? he wondered. It wasn't particularly well painted. In fact, the painter himself had seemed dissatisfied with it. Oliver felt a slight surge of irritation at being given a picture that the painter had been unable to finish properly. It needed something else in it, not just fields and sky. Maybe, Oliver thought, he should paint his bike in one of the corners, have it leaning over on its stand...

The girl in the bikini turned over suddenly and rolled onto her small dog, who gave an anguished yelp of pain and surprise. No, Oliver thought, inspired: if he painted the sky blue, then the field would look like a beach. Then he could paint the girl lying on the beach in her yellow bikini with her little dog. And then the painting would be finished—at least it would be about something. Oliver stared at the plump girl as she fussed over and petted her discomfited dog. He found himself grinning, felt the laugh brim in his throat, and quickly covered his mouth with his hand in case she should see. ♦

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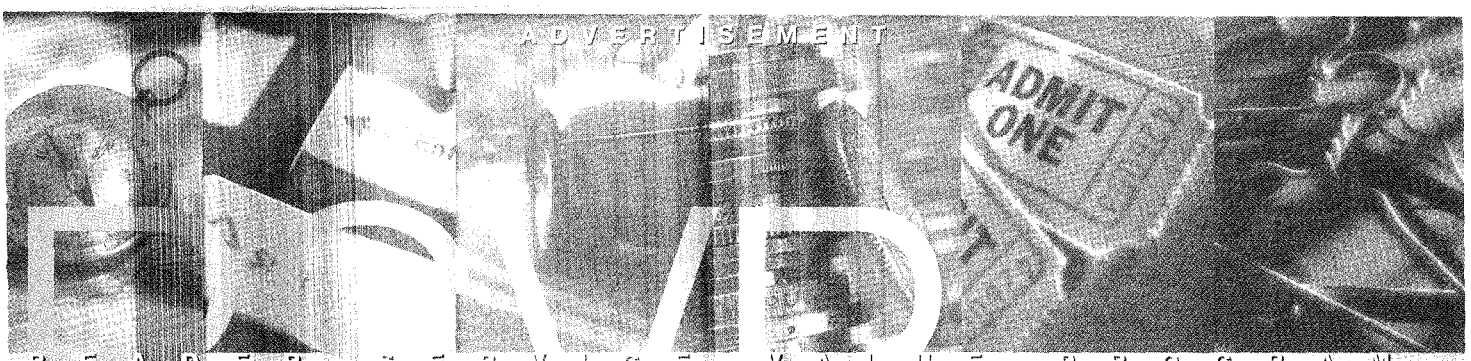

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VIRTUAL PATRIOTISM

Feeling good about war.

BY JOHN GREGORY DUNNE

"IT is well that war is so terrible," Robert E. Lee said to General James Longstreet at Fredericksburg. "We should grow too fond of it." The publication of Stephen E. Ambrose's "The Victors: Eisenhower and His Boys—The Men of World War II" (Simon & Schuster; $28) crowns a season during which we have seen America grow particularly fond of the Second World War, especially the European theatre of operations, from the assault on the Normandy beaches in June, 1944, to the unconditional German surrender signed at a schoolhouse in Reims on May 7, 1945. Fifty-three years later, the war in Europe is viewed largely as an American triumph, with supporting roles allocated to our doughty British allies and grudging credit at best to the Russian juggernaut a thousand miles to the east.

The event most responsible for the revived popularity of the Second World War, and for what many observers have rushed to call a new patriotism, was the release in July of Steven Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan." Spielberg's film has grossed nearly two hundred million dollars domestically and is already seen as having a lock on all the important Academy Awards. The appeal of "Saving Private Ryan" stems from a variety of factors, not least that the Second World War is universally regarded as the last "good war," a war fought against an ignoble enemy whose genocidal outrages shredded the human contract.

In four previous books—"Pegasus Bridge," "Band of Brothers," "D-Day," and "Citizen Soldiers"—Stephen Ambrose earned a reputation as an eminently readable historian of the front-line grunt: the G.I.s, Tommies, N.C.O.s, and company-grade officers who did the fighting and most of the dying in the European campaign. Spielberg has acknowledged that he and his writers, in crafting the screenplay of "Saving Private Ryan," were influenced by what might generously be called a close reading of these books. Details from them turned up in the film, which in fact paralleled, for its central story, Ambrose's account of the four Niland brothers: two were killed in action on D Day, a third died that same week in Burma, while the fourth (the Private Ryan of the movie) had parachuted into Normandy with the 101st Airborne. Perhaps because attention to the merits of Spielberg's previous picture, "Amistad," had been deflected by a very public plagiarism suit and subsequent settlement, he invited Ambrose to a preview of "Saving Private Ryan," and the historian was among its biggest cheerleaders, praising particularly the brutal and unrelenting verisimilitude of the film's best sequence, the landing on Omaha Beach, twenty-five minutes as blood-soaked and appalling as any ever seen on film.

"D-Day" was a best-seller, as was "Citizen Soldiers," which followed the largely conscript American armies out of the Norman hedgerows to Belsen, Buchenwald, and Dachau. In "The Victors," Ambrose returns to this perhaps too familiar territory. Conceived to show the war in Europe from the viewpoint of Dwight Eisenhower and the Willies and Joes in the foxholes "carrying out his orders," "The Victors" seems patched together with the cut and paste icons of the computer, from outtakes and from old stories better told in the earlier books. Ambrose is not really a military historian, in the manner of John Keegan, who has charted strategy and command decisions from Alexander the Great to the Hitler bunker. Neither is he an intellectual historian of the literature and lacunae of warfare, as Paul Fussell and Samuel Hynes are, nor is he, like Fussell and Hynes, a memoirist and combat veteran who brings to the subject a once youthful subaltern's first-hand knowledge of ennui, courage, and cowardice at the infantry-platoon (Fussell) or torpedo-squadron (Hynes) level.

What Ambrose is, however, is an indefatigable interviewer, and his skill at weaving his interviews into a good read is impressive. The problem is that war as a good read is war neutralized, made to appear an adventure, as it does to children playing soldiers, with bravery commonplace, death noble, and the righteous always victorious. Too often Ambrose falls into this trap; he describes one D Day infantry captain as having "given a magnificent briefing to his magnificently trained men," adding, "He was as good a company CO as there was in the U.S. Army." The C.O., however, was killed by an artillery shell even before the ramp went down on his landing craft at Omaha Beach. This is not to discredit the captain's valor, but the combat efficiency of a company commander is gauged under fire, not in training or briefings.

ONE must rely on the memoir rather than on the "read" for the hard edges of war. Two of the best memoirs are Fussell's "Doing Battle" and Hynes's "Flights of Passage." In 1945, Fussell, an infantry lieutenant in Europe, was grievously wounded a week short of his twenty-first birthday. Hynes, then twenty, was a Marine torpedo pilot on Okinawa. Both men became distinguished professors of literature, Fussell at the University of Pennsylvania, Hynes at Princeton, and both published many books. Both also became chroniclers of life under arms, Fussell with "The Great War and Modern Memory," which won a National Book Award, and "Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War," and Hynes with "The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War." Each, however, waited decades before writing about his own combat experiences, the wait allowing a contemplation of exacting truths generally unaddressed in the popular histories.

During V-J night celebrations on Okinawa, Hynes reports, a despised Marine sergeant major was "almost certainly" shot in the back and murdered. Dark levity occasionally lightened the impact of death; the body scraps of a

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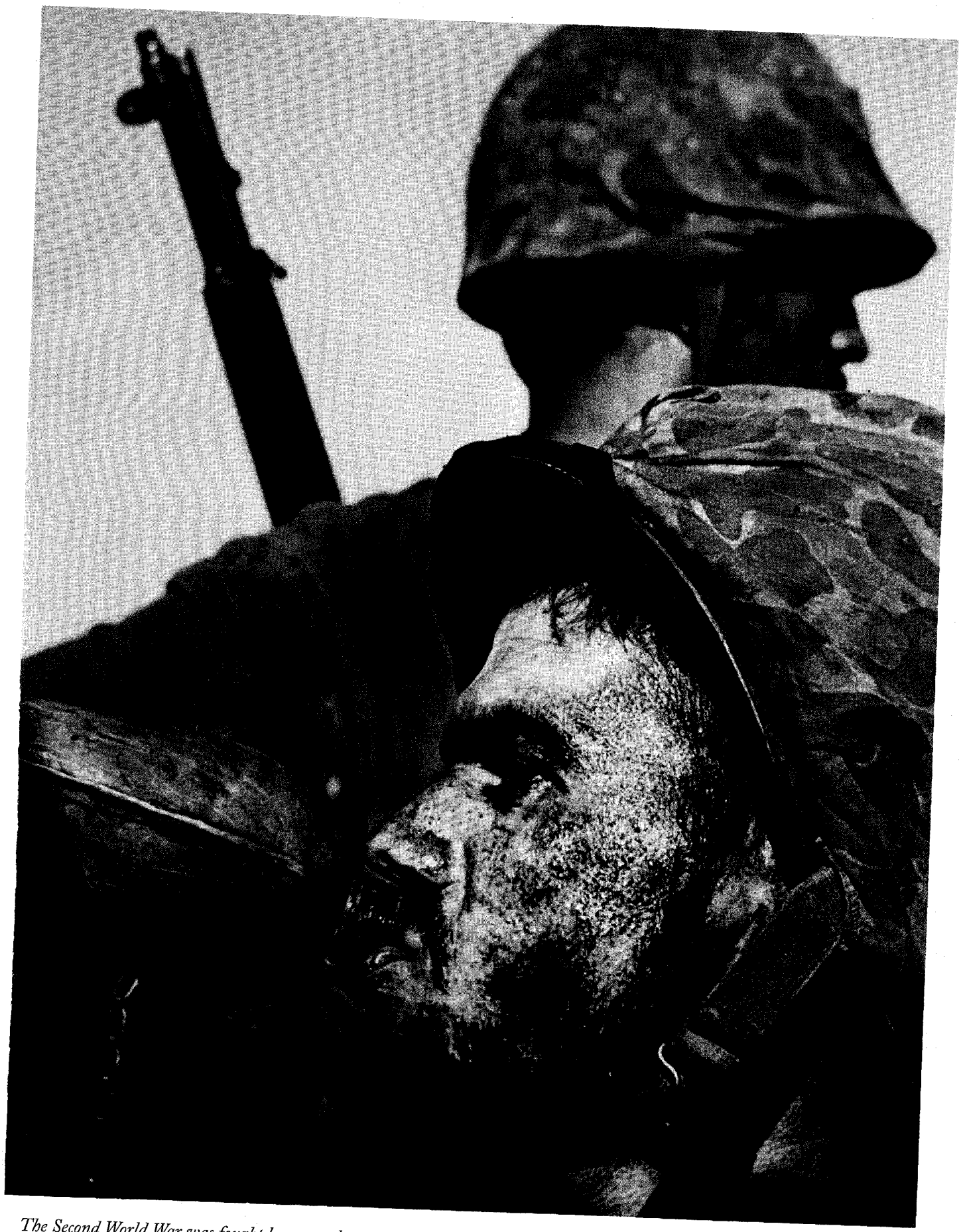

The Second World War was fought by men who are now subject to the indignities of age and impending death, like enfeebled Civil War veterans at the annual encampments of the Grand Army of the Republic. Photograph by W. Eugene Smith.

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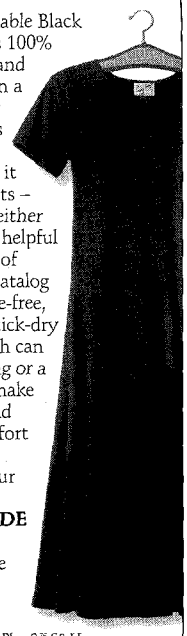

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pilot killed in a training accident, he writes, were "sent home in a coffin that had to be loaded with engine parts to give it sufficient weight." Fussell and Hynes also choose not to evade the reality of class distinctions in this theoretically most democratic of armies. "The wartime idolizing of the common man" particularly grated on Fussell. "At OCS I made no permanent friends," he writes, "and indeed I made none in the army." Nor did he find much to recommend about sleeping "surrounded by thirty other people, twisting, turning, muttering, snoring, masturbating, and farting."

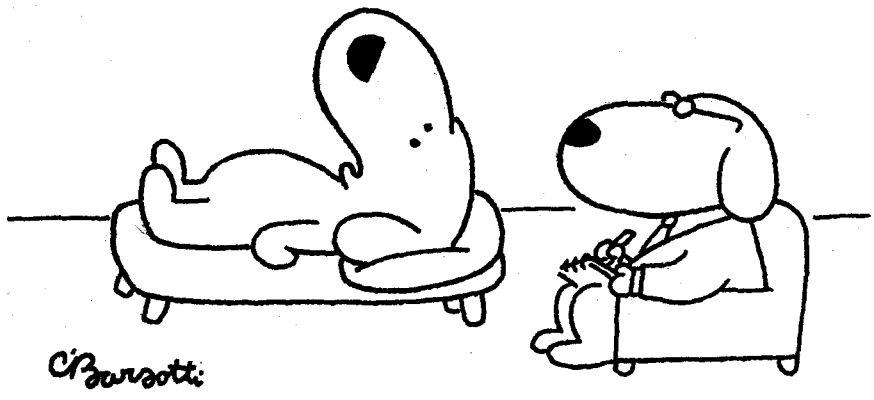
Hynes was similarly aloof. "Just a responsibility, like relatives or debts," he says of the two enlisted crewmen on his torpedo bomber. Fussell also admits that at times, out of "sheer unofficer-like terror," he was less martial than his battalion commander preferred. Like fear, atrocity was not unknown, nor was it unacceptable. Fifteen or twenty German soldiers, caught in a deep crater and trying to surrender, were shot to death by men in Fussell's company, "laughing and howling, hoo-ha-ing and cowboy and good-old-boy yelling," an event recalled around company campfires as "the Great Turkey Shoot."

Lingering on such behavior is anathema for Ambrose, who prefers the positive recall of the rifleman in the line. The stories he elicits reflect both his passions and the unconscious agenda of his interviewees. These veterans of the European war, the youngest of whom are now in their seventies and more than fifty years removed from the longest day or the Bulge or the Remagen bridge, are today not unaware of what they accomplished before returning to the normality of civilian life. The edges of their memories are softened by the knowledge that they are the few, the happy few, and the spirit of Henry V at Agincourt resonates in their remembrances:

> And gentlemen in England, now a-bed,
> Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here;
> And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
> That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

In paragraph- or page-size bites that cut away before ambiguities need be seriously explored, "The Victors" shifts among many small lives caught up in great events. The technique is as old as "The Canterbury Tales," but what "The Victors" most recalls is a movie. The narrative speeds along with rapid cinematic crosscutting from action to action, unit to unit, individual to individual; incidents often end with a teaser that keeps the suspense taut until the story can be picked up again. The result is that there is little room to examine the corrosive effects of spontaneous wanton cruelty, little room for the nuances of personality or the parsing of fear.

The resemblance to a movie, however, goes deeper than crosscutting. Ambrose has a reflex for idealizing the common man that is Hollywood to the core. It is a sentiment available even in the work of a pantheon director like John Ford, notably in his cavalry classics, "Fort Apache" and "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon." I confess that I have never been entirely enthusiastic about Ford's Indian-war westerns. For all the extraordinary shot-making, Ford too often resorted to primitive storytelling props. He was Irish, as I am, and sentimentality is often what passes in the Irish for feelings; on every Ford parade ground, a choral group of troopers was ready to celebrate any occasion with a



"I do what they tell me, I eat what they give me. How do I know they're not a cult?"

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burst of four-part harmony. On the far frontier of Manifest Destiny, bravery was a given, bad behavior not countenanced. Demon drink, that patronizing comedy curse of the Irish, was the only vice Ford allowed his horse soldiers.

James Jones, in "From Here to Eternity," saw military life as predicated on the class hatred between officers and enlisted men. For Ford, such a contention was heresy. A rear admiral in the Navy Reserve, he had an overly romantic officer's view of the military dynamic as a homoerotic bonding between commander and commanded. His Westerns glorified the social lie that sergeants were members of a brave servant class that existed but to do for Captain Wayne and the flag they served for thirteen dollars a month. "When the legend becomes fact," Ford has a character say, in "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance," "print the legend." It is an idea that leads not to art but to the agitprop used by the haves to keep the have-nots in line.

If Spielberg owes a debt to Ambrose for his material in "Private Ryan," he seems even more indebted to Ford's cavalry pictures. Once off Omaha Beach, Spielberg's film, however brilliantly shot and edited, becomes as stereotypical and sentimentally askew as a Ford oater, with the all-purpose Hollywood squad: the Jew, the Italian, the smartmouth from Brooklyn, the hillbilly Christer, and the intellectual who can't cut the mustard. Tom Sizemore, as the steadfastly loyal Sergeant Horvath, is an exact stand-in for the Ward Bond sergeant part in "Fort Apache," and Edward Burns, as Private Reiben, is a younger version of the raffish Victor McLaglen. But it is Tom Hanks, as Captain Miller, the perfect John Wayne surrogate, who grounds the picture in the familiar: a laconic and upright commander who accepts the proposition that orders are to be followed, no matter how superfluous they seem or what folly they promise.

THIS is a comforting notion, embraced not just by Spielberg and Ambrose but by a public caught up in the salubrious patriotism that "Private Ryan" unleashed in the land. On the Internet, reservations about the picture incurred a torrent of opprobrium. "Did your cappuccino fill you with too much angst to understand that this movie was not created to entertain you?" Morgan says to Brad. "I want you to count to 30. When you get finished, realize that in that amount of time 100s of men died at Omaha Beach so that you could piss on their memories 50 years later." And Darren to the unfortunate Brad: "Let me guess. You are a wannabe hippie. Take your poetry reading, latte-drinking, non-shaving, sandal-wearing BUTT to Arlington National Cemetery and then come back on line, pudboy."

Many film critics resorted to the same butch and bluster, and nowhere did this blossom faster than on the nation's op-ed pages. "Tom Hanks and his bunch are precisely the kind of guys who, two reels after the end of 'Ryan,' would have liberated Schindler's factory," Charles Krauthammer wrote in the Washington *Post* with a rhetorical vulgarity that he seemed to equate with grunt-speak. Maureen Dowd, praising Spielberg's "patriotic" movie in the New York *Times*, wrote, "Suddenly, baby boomers realize that, despite a buzzing economy and a passel of luxury goods, we are going to die without experiencing the nobility that illuminated the lives of our parents and grandparents. They lived through wars and depressions, life and death, good stomping evil. Our unifying event was 'Seinfeld.'"

I am suspicious of commentators who find parables in references to television shows; a thesaurus of topical smart references is sniggering, not thinking, a punditry for the army of the knowing. Dowd's posturing has the air of Generational Flagellation Lite. The fact that one was born in the years immediately before or after 1948 does not mean that he or she is automatically morally inferior. Ordering up a world war or a global economic crisis seems a heavy price to pay just to test a generation's mettle, and this welling up of nostalgia for such unexperienced challenges suggests the extent to which Vietnam remains a malignant shadow on the nation's X-ray.

Whatever his evasions about the draft and the reserves, William J. Clinton was at least consistent in his opposition to the Vietnam War. Other members of the political class who ducked the draft now have a new mantra: they supported the war, but they could not support the no-win policy of Lyndon Johnson and the Democratic Congress. It is a stand that exhibits a devotion to

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the situation ethics that many of them profess to abhor, especially since they did not rush to the recruiting office when Richard Nixon was elected. Just as the boomers have come to imagine that they would welcome a shot at "the nobility that illuminated the lives of our parents and grandparents," the generation following the boomers nourishes the idea that they would have behaved more honorably than the boomers did in the Vietnam era, that they would have gone to fight for the national weal as their grandparents did in the Second World War, that they would not have availed themselves of Canada or the academic deferment.

The strength of this delusion is such that it survived even the Gulf War. In February, 1991, David Maraniss, of the Washington *Post,* interviewed seven Vanderbilt undergraduates about Operation Desert Storm. All were twenty or twenty-one years old, roughly the same age as the troops poised to liberate Kuwait and invade Iraq. Five of the seven supported the war, none were willing to fight in it, and all were opposed to military conscription. "This might sound selfish, but I think it would be a shame to put America's best young minds on the front line," said one, and another, "I can't see myself shooting a gun. . . . I don't feel I could be an effective soldier."

On the op-ed page of the Los Angeles *Times*, a Princeton senior was even more unequivocal in his espousal of student entitlement, and his acceptance of the idea that America now had a Hessian class that could fight this and future wars, an army of the socially and economically disenfranchised from the skid rows of the American dream. "Is it hypocritical of me to support the Persian Gulf War in which some of my peers are dying but not be willing to put my life on the line?" he wrote. "I don't think so. . . . America's military is, at present, essentially a mercenary force. . . . We must remember that our soldiers have freely contracted to expose themselves to great risks. . . . No one is arguing that our volunteer troops are expendable. But we should be willing to risk their lives even when our immediate security is not on the line. After all, they agreed to be used that way."

What the Gulf War showed was that enthusiasm for war now rises in inverse proportion to the inclination to fight it. Ronald Reagan was the avatar of this new patriotism, patriotism as a spectator sport, with war the sport. Grenada was the kind of war Reagan liked—small, winnable, and with more medals passed out than there were troops in the engagement. When he talked about Grenada, Reagan made it seem like Iwo Jima revisited, a national antidote to Vietnam. "We restored that island to liberty," he said. "Yes, it's only a small island, but that's what the world is made of—small islands yearning for freedom."

Reagan worked as a war leader in this kind of limited action because he had an actor's presence and sense of the moment. He loved to salute; I doubt that America has ever had a snappier saluter as President, and he did it whenever he got the chance—to the colors, to honor guards, getting on or off Air Force One or the Presidential chopper. Saluting was a visual metaphor for his leadership. Unlike most actors, who salute in films as if they were waving good night to a date, Reagan knew how to salute—crisply, fingers pointed, movement squared. There was only one thing wrong with this piece of actor's business: he was a civilian. Saluting is a military courtesy, a sign of respect for senior rank. Only officers are saluted; the junior grade salutes, the higher rank returns the salute. If military personnel are not in uniform, they customarily do not salute. As President, Dwight Eisenhower, who commanded the largest army in American history, usually held his hand, or his homburg, over his heart on saluting occasions, as civilians are supposed to do.

THE patriotism inspired by "Saving Private Ryan" is like Ronald Reagan's saluting—appealing and not particularly relevant. The post-"Ryan" patriotism of the middle class is a virtual patriotism, meaning you do not have to do anything about it except express it and wish you had been at the conflict in question. It comes not from the actuality of a war but from a movie about a war. To find patriotism at the cineplex reduces it to a style, a look. "Patriotism depends as much on mutual suffering as on mutual success," Benjamin Disraeli once said, and in today's atmosphere it seems necessary to add that there is no mutual suffering in a place where you can buy butter-flavored popcorn

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and a three-dollar box of Milk Duds.

Since "Saving Private Ryan," bravery in combat has been extolled as the sine qua non of patriotism. It is not. Patriotism is the acquired devotion to an abstraction—the nation—while bravery under fire is personal and instinctive. The soldier who falls on a hand grenade, giving up his life to save the men in his squad, is a hero, but such a split-second impulse is unpremeditated, not rational. Virtual patriotism demands the creation of heroes. Yet heroes, Samuel Hynes has written, create a problem: "They stand too close to the center of war's values, and whether they mean to or not they act out the mottoes on the flags and the slogans on the posters."

Before Wilfred Owen was killed, in the last week of the First World War, he tried, in a letter to his mother, to describe no man's land, separating the trenches of the warring armies. "It is like the eternal place of gnashing of teeth," he wrote. "It is pock-marked like a body of foulest disease and its odour is the breath of cancer . . . uninhabitable, awful, the abode of madness." No mottoes, no flags, no slogans, no posters. No unchallenged cinematic or op-ed evocations of better men in a better time. In Honolulu last summer, my wife and I visited, for perhaps the twentieth time, Punchbowl, the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, the final resting place of thirteen thousand dead of the Pacific war. Punchbowl is a place of tears and bright, sunlit silence, an extinct volcano with the graves evenly spaced around the crater. When we visit, there is usually something new, unexpected, or wrenching to see. Twenty-eight years ago, I remember a Vietnam funeral, with a flag-draped coffin, an honor guard, taps, a rifle salute, and a mother, a father, and a sister over from the mainland to bid farewell to son and brother. On this July day, it was a row of graves with stone after stone bearing a simple inscription: "Unknown—December 7, 1941." ♦

LYRICISM UNPLUGGED

A dazzling American poet comes to the fore.

BY DEBORAH GARRISON

It isn't often you come across poetry that makes you want to turn to the stranger next to you on the bus, grab him by the collar, and say, "You have to read this!" But that's how I felt when I read a small poem called "96 Vandam," in Gerald Stern's "This Time: New and Selected Poems" (Norton; $27.50). It begins, "I am going to carry my bed into New York City tonight / complete with dangling sheets and ripped blankets; / I am going to push it across three dark highways / or coast along under 600,000 faint stars." Born in Pittsburgh in 1925, Stern, the son of Eastern European immigrants, is the kind of poet who sleeps on the fire escape to wake to the smell of roasting coffee and the sound of garbage grinding, and roams down to Rivington Street to sing songs in front of the Romanian Synagogue, like "a walking violin, screeching / a little at the heights, vibrating a little / at the depths, plucking sadly on my rubber guts." He has a gift for self-examination that never feels self-centered, and an infectious lyricism. When he opens a poem with the request "Let me please look into my window on 103rd Street one more time," you want, despite the melodrama, to look with him—"without crying," as he specifies, "without straightening the tie, or crumpling the flower." Stern fetch-

Gerald Stern

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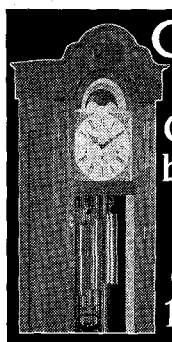

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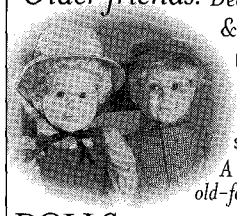

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ingly assumes that we know all about his former flower-crumpling tendencies and tears, about his need for relief from his own intensity: he throws these things on the page without fussing, showing us that we've been pre-approved as intimate consumers of his wishes and regrets.

It has been said that all American poets are descended from Whitman, yet a good number of them are his third cousins twice removed by way of Wallace Stevens. They are concerned only incidentally with the doings of regular people or the expression of emotion; their subject is chiefly the life of language. Stern's subject is the life of life. Here he's writing about the precious final days of summer:

> If you saw me swim back and forth through the algae
> you would know how much I love the trees floating under me;
>
> and if you saw me hold my leaf up to the sun
> you would know I was still looking for my roots;
>
> and if you saw me burning wood
> you would know I was trying to remember the smell of maple.
>
> If I rushed down the road buttoning my blue shirt—
> if I left without coffee—if I forgot my chewed-up pen—
>
> you would know there was one more day of happiness
> before the water rose again for another year.

Reading such lines, which seem virtually poured onto the page (and are as artful as any so-called formal poetry), I wondered why more of us haven't been aware of this work over the past two and a half decades. Stern's name was not unfamiliar to me—I recall the pleasant, bracing slap of the occasional poem in the occasional journal—but this book, which presents his whole career between two covers, came as a revelation. (In fact, I was lucky to stumble upon it; it received no major reviews that I'm aware of. But someone is paying attention. "This Time" was just nominated for the National Book Award in poetry.) A quick inspection of the volume's contents revealed, to my surprise, that Stern hadn't published a collection until 1973; called "Rejoicings," it was an edition of only a hundred and fifty copies. It wasn't until "Lucky Life," published in 1977, when he was already in his fifties, that he really arrived. Perhaps his relative obscurity—in spite of ten books and several important prizes and fellowships—has something to do with his being a late bloomer. One imagines him as a young man living outside the clubby world of poetic success, and maybe even struggling to accept his true métier. In an early poem, Stern, his hair freshly cut, explains, "I am finally ready for the happiness I spent my youth arguing and fighting against." In another, called "Stepping Out of Poetry," he evokes the passion of reading before literary ambition comes to paralyze us:

> Oh, what would you give to pick up your stack of books
> and walk down the icy path in front of the library?
>
> What would you give for your dream
> to be as clear and simple as it was then
> in the dark afternoons, at the old scarred tables?

And another lands on the twinned loneliness and solace of writing: "There is a sweetness buried in my mind; / there is water with a small cave behind it. . . . / It is what I keep to myself; what I return to; / the one thing that no one else wanted."

Perhaps no one did want Stern's sweetness: it's possible that the reason he has not been heralded as he deserves is that he feels too much, opens his heart too readily, exulting and moaning and courting meaning in a shamelessly unpostmodern fashion. But this onrush is counterbalanced by his half-mocking amusement at his own incisive mind. "Nothing is too small for my sarcasm," he announces in one opening line and, in another, "Today it was just a dry leaf that told me / I should live for love." He wants to be objective about his volcanic tendencies—an impulse that refines not only feeling but language. "I have traded half of what I have— / I'll call it half—so I can see these smudges / in the right light," he writes in a poem called "My Swallows." The little dip of "I'll call it half"—the admission of self-doubt, the rueful accounting, with its built-in acknowledgment of a tendency to exaggerate—is what distinguishes these lines from many an ordinary recitation of woes. And when he continues, "I think I live in ruins / like no one else, I see myself as endlessly / staring at what I lost," we see the trembling, lifted chin of his self-comprehension: what he's saying is not that he lives in ruins like no one else but that he lives in ruins the way everyone does.

Stern has a kind of pride peculiar to many first-generation Americans: he makes a home of being an outsider. In "The Poem of Life" he sits on the porch smoking cigars with his best friend after dinner—the pair of them "seizing and judging everything that comes / into the range of our brutal memories," as he describes it, "two delectable Jews, / spending our happy and cunning lives / in the honeysuckles." And his happiness, I think, *is* particularly Jewish in its inflection: he writes, both directly and indirectly, about the Holocaust, and about the painful joy of being a middle-class American, survivor by virtue of geography, who has the chance blessing of "lucky life." But Stern's need to judge among the honeysuckles expresses more than a cultural cast of mind; it's the bass line of his art—an aesthetic of tenderness, you could say, which is not as soft and gentle as it sounds. When he cries, "Dear mole! I have forgotten you," or writes a poem from the viewpoint of a dead dog on the side of the road ("There is a look we have with the hair of the chin / curled in mid-air, there is a look with the belly / stopped in the midst of its greed"), the awareness of brutality in all things seems to be the source of his lyricism. Indeed, brutality itself becomes gorgeous in his hands:

> There's nothing in this gardenous world more delightful
> than blossoms lying where they fall,
> soldiers sprawled from one ravine to another,
> lovers under a bloody window.

He is prepared to be slain and lie on that littered lawn, and his desire to be pierced through by some arrow—be it poetry, love, or what he calls "another insane devotion"—gives his verse an amplitude that is too often missing from contemporary poetry. "I will have to tell you what it is like," he says about sleeping under the stars:

> since I was the one lying on my back
> with my arms in the air
> . . . trying to make up my mind
> whether it was an early heaven just being there
> or whether it was another bitter vertigo.

Stern's encompassing embrace allows us to step into his delirium and experience both. ♦

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BRIEFLY NOTED

MASTER GEORGIE, by Beryl Bainbridge (Carroll & Graf; $21). This small, stunning novel spans eight years in the life of one George Hardy, a beamish boy who meets his end tending Crimean War dead. His story is told by a motley trio: Myrtle, a foundling who attaches herself to George with ferocity; Pompey, a street urchin who arrives on the scene pushing a Punch and Judy carriage; and Dr. Potter, a barmy evolutionist besotted with George's sister. By weaving together their surprising tales, Bainbridge, skillful as a spider, delineates the traps laid for the soul by the human heart.

THE SILVER CASTLE, by Clive James (Random House; $23). So close and yet so far: growing up in the squalor of Bombay's slums, young Sanjay is captivated by the nearby Silver Castle, a glittering set for Indian movie musicals. The real trouble starts, of course, when his dream of working in "Bollywood" comes true. Sanjay is a masterly creation, a sort of bemused spectator of his own life. Equally memorable, though, is the book's unseen narrator, a keen-eyed cosmopolitan who riffs brilliantly on everything from Third World Art Deco to the local colas of far-flung places.

EX LIBRIS, by Anne Fadiman (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $16). In this charming clutch of essays, Fadiman confesses her passion for books of all types. She reads Milton's "On His Blindness" over the phone to her father, whose own sight is failing; assesses the tricky business of "marrying" her library with her husband's; and admires the distilled beauty of the index to the 1902 Sears, Roebuck catalogue (Acme Harness Soap, Adjustable Combs, Adzes...). Each essay is a model of clarity and lightly worn erudition, and speaks volumes about the author's appreciation for people as well as books.

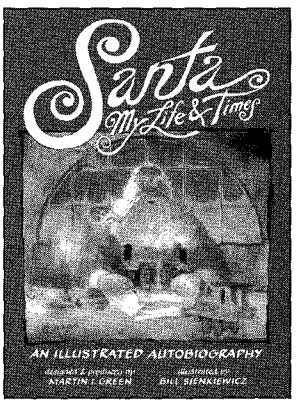
THE FIX, by Michael Massing (Simon & Schuster; $25). Two contrasting portraits frame this virtuoso investigation of the government's failed war on drugs. One is of a pioneering psychiatrist who founded the first publicly funded detox and rehabilitation program, in Chicago, in 1968; the other is of an East Harlem drug counsellor and his heroic efforts to obtain even minimal treatment for local addicts. Tracing the evolution of public policy over three decades, Massing points out that the Nixon Administration's strategy—adapted from the Illinois program but later discarded—was the only demonstrably successful approach.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS MORE, by Peter Ackroyd (Doubleday/Talese; $30). This superb biography does more than narrate the life of the Lord Chancellor who was beheaded and later canonized for refusing to accept Henry VIII as head of the church. It describes the London More knew, the ferment of humanism to which he contributed, and the contemporary appeal of Catholicism. It also portrays an archetypal zealot: More denied heretics their rights of conscience, but later pleaded his own conscience without ever glimpsing the parallel between himself and the Protestants he had executed.

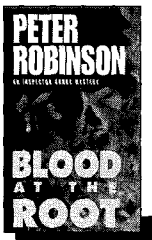
(Advt.)

True, there is still a gargantuan Thanksgiving feast to be pondered, prepared, and devoured. But it's not too early for us to turn a thought or two toward Christmas.

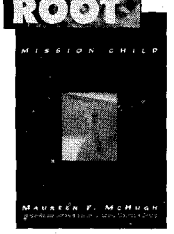
Martin I. Green has joined forces with renowned artist **Bill Sienkiewicz** to create the colorful and very personal autobiography of one of our most enduring and beloved icons. ***SANTA: MY LIFE AND TIMES*** is an epic adventure that spans centuries. Combining myth, magic and imagination, it weaves its spell in a voice that is both engaging and familiar. All Santa's mysteries are revealed here—the secrets of his origins and reindeer aeronautics; his astounding ability to cover the entire world in a single night—in a book that offers readers a personable and distinctly real hero without sacrificing any of the timeless enchantment. This is Santa's tale as only Santa could tell it; a Christmas story for the children we love, for the children we were, and for the children we always will be.



On a less jolly plane, **Peter Robinson**'s Inspector Detective Alan Banks investigates the slaying of a local neo-Nazi youth in ***BLOOD AT THE ROOT***. Robinson's—and Banks's—milieu is a small industrial city in Yorkshire, England, and the author's ability to limn the landscape's wide spectrum of grays and the aching humanity of its inhabitants has already earned this mystery series high praise and awards. In this latest case, nothing is truly black and white—which is, in fact, the way of our complex world.



MISSION CHILD is a haunting tale of personal and planetary transformation by author **Maureen F. McHugh**, whose debut novel, *China Mountain Zhang*, was selected as a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. It concerns a young woman facing the cataclysmic end of everything she has ever loved or known—a devastation wrought by the returning Earthborn race that originally sired her world's civilizations—and her transcendent odyssey through the ruins toward an astonishing realization about herself and her role in the great cosmic order.



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ANTIC DISPOSITIONS

Moody Mozart; grotesque Gluck; yearning Janáček.

BY ALEX ROSS

THERE is something chilly at the heart of "The Marriage of Figaro," and Jonathan Miller's new production at the Metropolitan Opera captures it. The wedding of Figaro and Susanna takes place in slanting, late-afternoon light, in a penumbral atmosphere. The shadows make dramatic sense: Figaro's marriage is obscured by the plots, lusts, and resentments that surround it. Both the audience and the actors are so fixated on the antics of the rascally Count Almaviva—who thinks he's getting a share of the young bride but is really being set up for a fall—that the wedding itself hardly registers. These characters are itching for the night, for further games of disguise. The Count's mansion—a looming design by Peter Davison—is decrepit and unpainted, seemingly not so much for lack of money as for lack of interest. Skulduggery is what counts. There are odd tricks of perspective: the floor is tilted like the deck of a listing ship. The stage is set for moody, complex farce. The question, of course, is whether the stars of the Met are in the mood for moody farce tonight.

"Figaro" is often said to be a gleefully subversive piece, in which a servant outwits and humiliates his master. Maynard Solomon, in his biography of Mozart, writes that in the end the Count is "stripped of all pretenses to authority"—that he will "rule only by grace, by the mercy of women and servants, rather than by moral right or personal power." But the disorder of "Figaro" is, I think, distinctly fleeting; it's a spell of midsummer madness. There is no hint that the Count will not wake up the next morning, lose his hangover, and rule as before. Like Prince Hal, he may have improved his standing with the people for having spent a night in the gutter: they may resent him less the next time he cracks the whip. (That Napoleon was an admirer of the Figaro comedies suggests that they did not go far in the deconstruction of state power.) The "reconciliation" ensemble at the end is a musical wonder but also a theatrical sleight of hand: Mozart's lyrical genius descends as a deus ex machina. Those immaculate rising-and-falling phrases bestow grace on characters who do not seem to have earned it and are

In "Figaro," Terfel plays along and Bartoli runs wild.

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probably doomed to make the same mistakes the following day.

What "Figaro" does subvert is the balance of power between men and women. The most potent figure is the Countess, who, while wearing an air of serene resignation, plots behind the scenes to trip up her husband. Having caught him in an impossible position, she pardons him with mysterious ease. (One is somehow reminded of Hillary Clinton.) Renée Fleming was splendid, for the most part, in this role. She opened up her voice more generously than she had in a cautious appearance with the Berlin Philharmonic a few weeks ago, and "Porgi amor" and "Dove sono" became feasts of soprano majesty. She caught the Countess's nobility and melancholy. I missed, however, a sense of the character's desperate shrewdness. Fleming seemed never to descend from her platform into the thick of things.

Part of the problem may have been the difficulty of establishing a rapport with Cecilia Bartoli, who made a monotonous cartoon of Susanna and nearly wrecked the opening night. She tore around like a Disney character let loose in a Vermeer. When she used her singing voice, she was, as usual, marvellous: she spun off high notes effortlessly and articulated small ornaments with supernatural clarity. But she wasn't always singing: she also rasped, cackled, and giggled, all the while scampering idiotically from one end of the stage to the other. She calmed down for "Deh vieni," her passionate nocturne in Act IV, and delivered the rapt lyricism that had been lacking. Still, she croaked the aria's bottom notes; the part lies a little low for her. (For three later performances, she has somehow persuaded the Met to let her jettison "Deh vieni" in favor of a showy, irrelevant aria, which Mozart composed for a revival in 1789.)

With the two female leads dwelling in quite different worlds, the dramatic balance shifted to the men. The dominant figure was the Figaro of Bryn Terfel, whose exasperation with his new wife seemed more sensible than it should have. Terfel laid on the gruff bonhomie a bit thick at times, but his antics were of a piece with his boldly phrased, rhythmically vital singing. James Levine signalled the move to deeper themes in the fourth act with an almost Wagnerian underscoring of the cello and bass lines, and Terfel matched that dark sound with a delightfully brutal "Aprite." Dwayne Croft showed himself similarly nimble as the Count—at least in terms of physical gesture. Miller appears to have envisioned him as a kind of nervous chameleon, and Croft, accordingly, cut a sequence of dashing figures, from the decadent, red-robed prowler of Act I to the handsome hunter of Act II and on to the hawklike, short-wigged conspirator of Acts III and IV. But Croft's baritone was a little too tightly managed to match this array of disguises. Susanne Mentzer, as Cherubino, ran around a lot, perhaps just to keep up with Bartoli. She sang with recital-like poise, falling back on a glowingly smooth legato line.

The production is handsome and subtle. James Acheson's costumes are amusingly opulent, and Mark McCullough's lighting puts a cinematic patina on the action. The staging shows Miller's fascination with all kinds of conversational gestures. He installs a rich repertory of looks, glares, and sidewise glances, of hands shaking and feet tapping, of melodramatic twitches that betray insincerity. Even though Terfel was the only singer in whom the physical and the vocal were at one, this "Figaro" turned out to be better theatre than most events at the Met. It was magical in musical terms: Levine kept to a brisk pace, yet he gave both his singers and his orchestra room for expression. I doubt whether a "Figaro" has been heard in recent years in which so many of the notes were perfectly in place.

THE New York City Opera went astray last month with a grotesque production of Gluck's "Orfeo ed Euridice." It was directed by Martha Clarke, who was also responsible for the painfully perplexing "Marco Polo" that appeared last year. I liked a few of her notions: the lost souls at the gates of Hades jerking as if in their death throes, the denizens of the Elysian Fields dancing nude before an eerie pale-white screen. On the whole, though, the pace was deadly, and the voices didn't help. Artur Stefanowicz,

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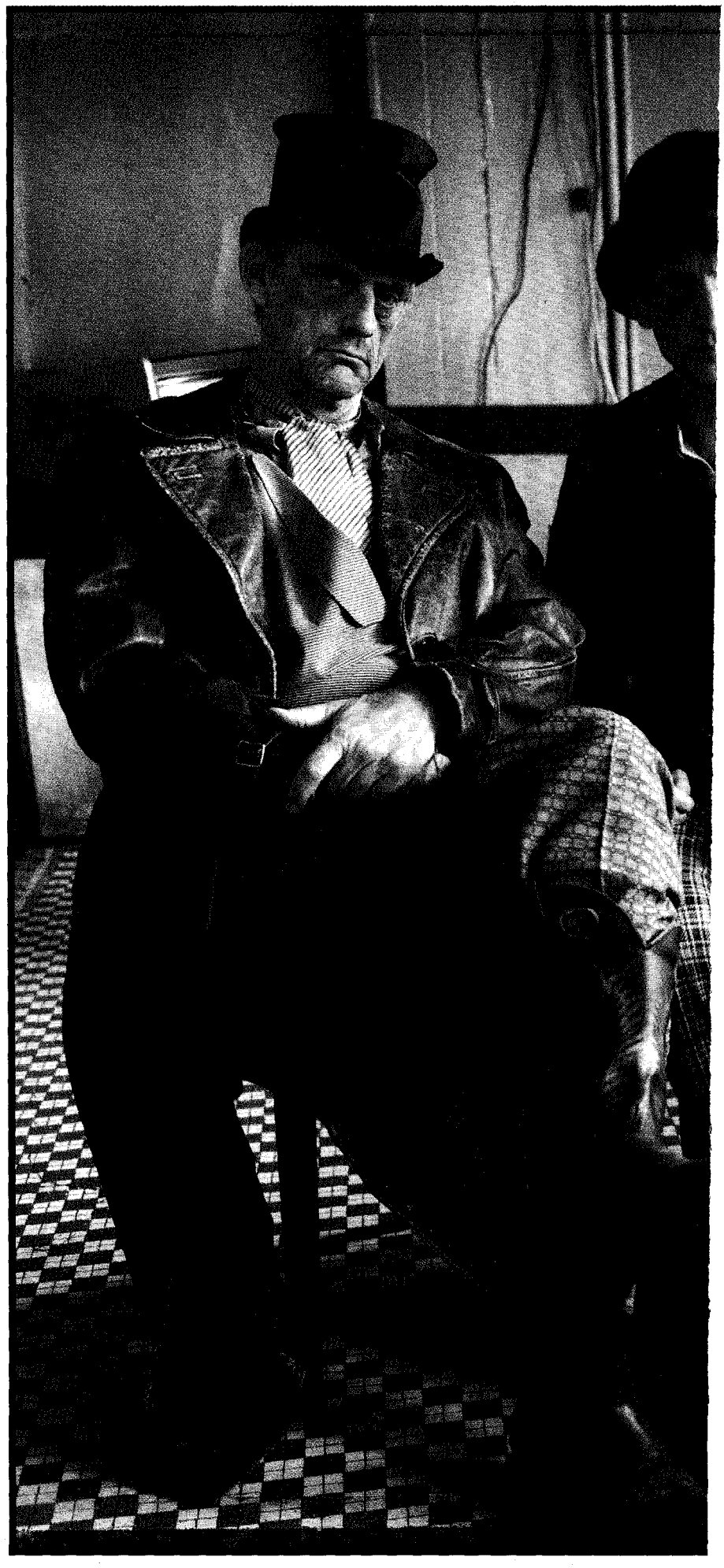
as Orfeo, sang accurately but without the rich tone color that distinguishes the better countertenors. In the last scene, the production abruptly lost its mind: figures dashed about in raincoats and tossed a skeleton into the air.

City Opera has made amends by bringing back "The Cunning Little Vixen," Leoš Janáček's heartbreaking fable of foxes, hunters, and other creatures of the Moravian woods. The production, which first appeared in 1981, was designed by Maurice Sendak, and his cuddly-spooky style proved to be uncannily appropriate. This "Vixen" has had only two revivals since its première, and I'm not sure why. The demographics of the piece are impeccable: kids will love the dancing grasshoppers and strutting chickens, while adults may find themselves blindsided by the deeper themes of death, rebirth, cruelty, and compassion. The two leads—Richard Paul Fink, as the Forester, and Robin Blitch Wiper, as the Vixen—sang with charm and conviction, and George Manahan brought to life Janáček's sprung rhythms in the orchestra pit. The finale, in which the Forester lays down his gun and falls into the arms of the animals of the woods, remains one of the most convulsively affecting death scenes in opera. The orchestral coda lasts just seventeen bars, and by the end of it any sane person should be in tears. ♦

BECKETT IS BACK

He never shows up, but we never get tired of "Waiting for Godot." Ever since Samuel Beckett's enigmatic masterpiece premièred at a tiny Left Bank theatre, back in 1953, we've been trying to interpret the vigil that his two tramps hold for someone whose importance, and very existence, they can't quite confirm—even though the playwright told us not to bother. The Broadway première, in 1956, which starred the burlesque entertainer Bert Lahr, established "Godot" as the play that separates the comedians from the tragicomedians. Next up, in the Classic Stage Company's version, opening November 18th, are Christopher Lloyd, Richard Spore, Tony Shalhoub, and John Turturro.

Photograph by Max Vadukul



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A FINE RAWNESS

Nan Goldin's heartbreaking beauties.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

NAN GOLDIN is two people—a needy sentimentalist and an adamantine aesthete, who unite to make her one of the best art photographers of the last twenty years. If you've lived much, you know both types. The emotionally blundering sentimentalist dewily loves humanity in general while falling in miserable love with a monotonous succession of human beings in particular, each somehow exactly wrong. The aesthete, one almost believes, would heave his or her own grandmother out of a speeding car if it promised a glimpse of perfection.

Sentimentalists and aesthetes are born to loathe each other. The sentimentalist recoils from the aesthete's visions of orderly bliss, which purportedly serve the human heart while coldly using it, and maybe even using it up. The aesthete would like the sentimentalist to dine on broken glass for the sin of presuming to nurture "creativity." The two temperaments are fire and ice.

No wonder Goldin's art is steamy. Thirty-four black-framed, glossy new cibachromes at the Matthew Marks Gallery, all but one measuring thirty by forty inches, deliver a Goldin-esque mixture of messy content and meticulous form. Form registers with unusual force on this occasion, which includes semi-abstract, powerfully colored departures into landscape, cityscape, and still-life. It is perversely reassuring, then, to report that the artist's personal existence, which her work has condemned us to know practically everything about, remains a regular shambles.

Forty-five years old now, the Boston-raised, avowedly bisexual bohemian got famous with "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency"—her catchall title for multitudinous photographs of fetchingly wrecked, scene-making youth in action and on the nod, in the nineteen-seventies and early eighties. She helped instigate our present culture's eager compulsion to make public bonfires of formerly off-limits private experience. How Goldin is she after all these years?

Goldin's "Self-Portrait on Bridge at Golden River, Silver Hill" (1998).

Well, we are given to understand that earlier this year she underwent detoxification at the sanitarium in Connecticut called Silver Hill—a storied crash site for upper-class flame-outs—after nearly a decade of being drug-free ended with a heroin binge. The episode is memorialized in a montage of nine photographs, ranging from images of frenetic drugging through grim visions of a tunnel and of rain to a bleakly hopeful shot of tenderly green trees and lawn. Corny? You bet. But then so is addiction.

Goldin relapsed in the company of a shallowly handsome young boyfriend, identified as David H., whose documentation in this show—in bed, in the shower, the usual—rather wanly reprises the role played in "Ballad" by an ominously louche lover. That earlier consort's final calling card was Goldin's battered face in a well-known, shocking self-portrait of 1984. David H. was apparently harmless enough. In his wake, if that's what Goldin's self-portrait in the bathroom mirror of a hotel in Zurich records, she looks only tired.

Goldin sure does get around. If this show came with credits, her travel agent would figure prominently. She identifies not only pictured soulmates but the locales of their picturing: Turin, Vienna, Stockholm, Positano, Arles, Berlin, and elsewhere. Sometimes the geography counts. In one photograph, a young man turns away into a blue-gray, liquescent atmosphere that is, to a fare-thee-well, off-season Venice. But most of the settings belong to an everywhere archipelago of late-twentieth-century hotel rooms, apartments, and night.

Cynics have suggested that Goldin's self-advertised shenanigans are career moves calculated to juice up a project that in recent years—with a series portraying AIDS sufferers and another about flaming youth in Asia—has declined to-

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ward mere nosy photojournalism. For once, cynics seem as much right as wrong. But you won't get anything from Goldin by dwelling on her transparent vagaries. For best results, consider the amorality of beauty and the universality of heartbreak—keys to an American tradition that comes down from Walker Evans, through Robert Frank and Diane Arbus directly to Goldin.

EVANS, Frank, and Arbus were progressively more explicit photographer laureates of the abyssal lack—the wanting, the want—that defines American soulfulness. Think of the largest genre of our nation's artistic symbols: melancholias of city, suburb, town, and farm; the solitude (not loneliness) of Edward Hopper; the choiring voids of Jackson Pollock; emptinesses of open roads, prairies, rivers, and ocean; the ache of the blues; the light across the water from East Egg; the whiteness of the Whale.

Evans, a Yankee Proust, surrendered to the communitarian dreamings of ramshackle folk architecture. Frank, the fearfully isolated foreign pilgrim, returned from Route 66 with the greatest and saddest of all photography books: "The Americans." Arbus seized on poignant freakishness that turned her ravaged heart inside out. All three revealed jagged yens for emotional connections that, in this harsh land, recede, like desert horizons, at the same rate at which they are approached.

Goldin contributes to the tradition a fissure that is internal, not between the self and the world but right down the self's middle. People used to wield a clinical term for this condition of psychic disjuncture: "narcissism," pronounced in tones of corrective disapproval. Pretty much the spiritual climate of the U.S.A. today, the condition has become, properly, nameless. Goldin amplifies some of its effects. To be deaf to her testimony, you must possess earplugs against bells that toll for thee. If she doesn't upset you, pay closer attention.

The sentimentalist in Goldin lives her blurry life. The aesthete takes crystalline views of it. The aesthete is as rigorously professional and acute as the sentimentalist is sloppily overpersonal and up to her hairline in backwashes of dumb promises. T. S. Eliot recommended a dissociation between "the man who suffers and the mind which creates." With Goldin, sufferer and creator dissociate about as temperately as two tomcats in a sack. But elegant art keeps emerging from the tussle.

I once asked Goldin if, as I suspected, she tends not to look at her human subjects as she photographs them. She answered yes. She said that if she assesses anything at all through the lens of her ever handy thirty-five-millimetre camera—when not snapping on virtually blind impulse—it pertains to background and framing, color and light. This is the aesthete speaking. The sentimentalist's prior investment in the situation insures that something rawly intimate cannot help finding its way onto film. Goldin need only open the shutter to let it in.

This show includes startling shots of friends' children and of her parents, self-exposed beyond normal verges of embarrassment. Why be embarrassed? We're all abject wackos inside, aren't we? Goldin simply ignores boundaries between inside and outside. For her, the sole germane distinction is the practical one between what a camera can see and what a camera can't. She proves, incidentally, that a camera can see more than you ever imagined.

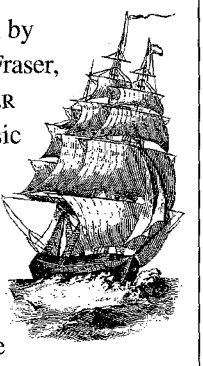
The spiritual nakedness of Goldin's people has little to do with either exhibitionism or voyeurism, because her pictures provide no detached vantage points for her subjects to play to or for a viewer to watch from. Looking at the works, we are not safe. Their human intensity stares down our aesthetic scrutiny. It's like being challenged by gazes at a party that is about to turn wild: "With it or not? In or out?" You mightily sense your own inhibitions—perhaps with gratitude. (Where did I put my coat?)

Wildness becomes an awful nuisance with advancing age. Hence the pathetic note in Goldin's midlife regression. But the alternative does not have to be dry tedium, as a promising aspect of this show affirms. There remains beauty. Goldin took a really splendid picture, of a sort new for her, at Silver Hill: a late-afternoon view from a sylvan bridge of a stream fretted with gilt reflections. The shadow of the bridge and of the photographer falls across the water. What does the picture mean? Grace, I think. It's amazing how lightly life's sorrow can weigh during moments of illumination. ♦

NIGHTS OF ADVENTURE BETWEEN COVERS

Captain Blood

BY RAFAEL SABATINI



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MASTER OF HER DOMAIN

Our favorite control freak moves uptown.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

YOU know, you really have to admire Sandra Bernhard. Or do you? That's the dilemma that this performer has posed since she hit the big time, fifteen years ago, in Scorsese's "The King of Comedy," in which she played a crazed fan whose idea of getting closer to the object of her affection (a talk-show host, played by Jerry Lewis) was to kidnap him and tie him up. It has always been hard to tell where her sharp-tongued commentary on celebrity narcissism ends and her sharp-tongued narcissistic celebrity begins: she has built her career on keeping the audience guessing about her sincerity and on presenting herself as a kind of crusader in the war against fools. The very titles of her shows force you to ask what it is, exactly, she's doing up there, and also what, exactly, you're doing watching her. Ten years ago, there was "Without You I'm Nothing." The unspoken message was that without her *we* were nothing: if Bernhard didn't invent us, we wouldn't exist.

The title of her new show, "I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!," which had an extended run Off Broadway last winter and is now at the Booth, calls to mind the existential battle cry of the legendary monster mamas of show biz, from Rose in "Gypsy" to Judy Garland in "I Could Go On Singing." Almost everything she does in the show—a combination of singing, standup, and scathing observations on the vapidity of the fashion world, pop culture, and life in general—reminds you that behind every goddess of give is a tsarina of take, sucking the oxygen out of the room. She walks onto the stage, and as the audience claps she signals for more applause, nodding not so much to thank us as to affirm our good judgment in recognizing her greatness. (At one point, Bernhard, who is wearing a long, slinky, not really opaque black dress, notes how good she looks considering that she had a baby only four months ago.) If you don't approve of this contradictory gesture—Bernhard sending up star neediness while insisting on star

Sandra Bernhard wants to be loved, but at least she comes clean about it.

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treatment—then she's not the gal for you.

There's less snarling—though still plenty of bark and bite—in Bernhard's act than there once was. It's hard to imagine her doing something she famously did in "Without You I'm Nothing," which was to play an embarrassingly ingratiating message that a *Village Voice* critic had left on her answering machine. This was probably very funny, but a little dread must have seized the hearts of people in the audience even as they were laughing: *What if she kills me next?* Bernhard no longer needs to resort to terror tactics, and in any case they would no longer work. National scandals here and royal scandals abroad have permanently sapped the deliciousness from this kind of exposure, and what may once have seemed—as Bernhard would say, in the breathy, urgent voice she uses to mock ad pitches—"edgy, fun, fresh" would now seem simply an error in judgment. In addition to having grown out of some of her old material, Bernhard is too good for some of her new material. When she makes fun of Liza Minnelli (while, of course, chastising us for our insensitivity to poor Liza), you can't help noticing that Bernhard is a better singer than her victim. In moments like this, she appears to be slumming—wanting to hog both the high road and the low road. But talent has its imperatives, and, once you've become an expert with a double-edged sword, you owe it to your talent (and your audience) to drop the sledgehammer. Yes, Sandra, it *is* too easy to make fun of Liza Minnelli.

Bernhard has been compared to the late comedian Andy Kaufman, whose life's work was to unsettle his audience. It was never clear whether he said what he meant or meant what he said, and the same applies to Bernhard. But her current act made me more interested in where she was going than in where she was coming from; I enjoyed the skill with which she handled the hairpin turns of her material. In her opening, for example, she does a routine, part spoken and part sung, about what was missing in her life. "I used to sleep with the TV on," she says, painting a vivid picture of isolation. She goes on, "I've turned my house into a place where it's not so lonely, where it's not just me only." Here she pretty much has us in the palm of her hand; but in the next breath she goes into diva mode. Pointing at us, pretending to pick out particular people in the audience, she says, "Tonight, I have you and you and you, and I don't mean in a Diana Ross kind of way. Though God knows I have reached out to the little people."

The odd thing about responding to Bernhard is that it feels like the reverse of the old truism: laugh, and you laugh alone. You somehow sense that if Bernhard caught you enjoying yourself she would shut you down in a heartbeat. She'd rather keep us at bay. I didn't mind that, though; in fact, I preferred the distance that the Booth afforded to the faux intimacy of the Westbeth, where the show originated. Bernhard has made a big deal about being a downtown chick, but Broadway suits her more than she might want to admit.

Like Madonna, Bernhard has an unstoppable, somewhat inexplicable drive. Yet Madonna, for all her attention-getting changes in identity, seems set in stone. Bernhard has a strong personality, but her performances also show a kind of wisdom about how uncertain the concept of identity is in the first place. Most, if not all, performers want to be loved—adored, worshipped—and Bernhard is no different, but she comes clean about it. She talks about going home after the show and having the urge to wake up her baby: "Hi, honey. Mama's home. Wake up! Keep me company. Mama's lonely. Entertain me—that's why I had you in the first place." Bernhard isn't wrong to see narcissism at every turn: where human beings go, narcissism is sure to follow, and, like the good Girl Scout that she probably never was, she takes responsibility for it. If she rather loudly demands her merit badge in exchange, well, you can't say she hasn't earned it. And she continues to get herself in trouble and risk unpopularity. "I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!" closes with a number that's spectacularly awful. It's hard to believe that Bernhard doesn't know it, especially since the bit that precedes it hits all the emotional notes that performers try to leave their audiences with. The number was almost unbearable, but I liked Bernhard's willingness to try something different—to tamper with the "love" that she had generated between herself and her audience, to get her hands dirty with work. She may not suffer fools gladly, but she's not afraid to be a fool herself. For that, at the very least, you do have to admire her, damn it. ♦

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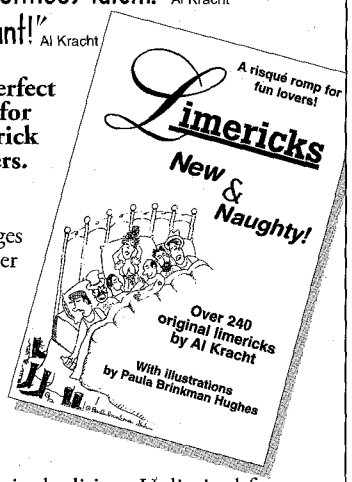

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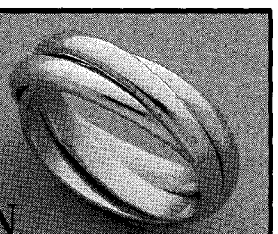

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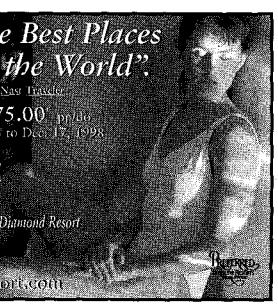

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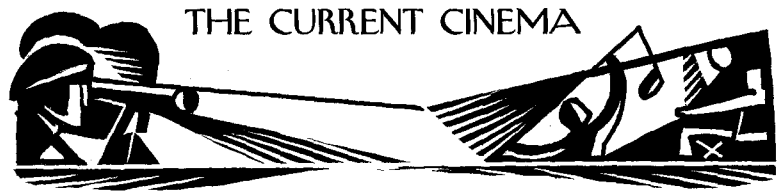

DARKNESS OUT OF LIGHT

Looking for salvation in "The Siege," "Elizabeth," and "Life Is Beautiful."

BY DAVID DENBY

"THE SIEGE," a tumultuous super-production set in a terrorized New York, may require a critic less than a shrink. In the beginning of the picture, the C.I.A. kidnaps an Islamic religious leader somewhere in the Mid-east. In retaliation, Islamic terrorists pull off a series of atrocities in New York: they blow up a bus, then a theatre filled with first-nighters; they hold schoolchildren captive. The casualties climb into the hundreds, and New York is paralyzed. No one can go *shopping*. A hard-driving F.B.I. agent (Denzel Washington) kills some of the terrorists—members of secret cells, buried among the Arab-American community in Brooklyn. But the F.B.I. man can't quite finish the job; a few cells remain. So a sinister U.S. Army general (Bruce Willis) declares martial law and enters the city at the head of his troops; the general seals off Brooklyn, rounds up every one of the young Arab-American males in the borough, and deposits them in an open-air stadium. The director, Edward Zwick, stages the death of American liberty: tanks and armed men streaming across the Brooklyn Bridge; uproar among the fruit stands on Atlantic Avenue; Arab-Americans hassled, rousted, captured, and penned; a naked terrorist tortured and murdered by Americans.

Now, let us suppose that I give myself over to forbidden thoughts—I enjoy the daydream of murdering an enemy. And let us suppose as well that, alarmed by my fantasy, I then lecture myself on the moral iniquity of murder. Am I not licensing an illicit desire by punishing myself with guilt? For the sensation of guilt miraculously restores my sense of myself as a moral person. I cannot be a man who would commit murder; therefore I am free to dream of murder. I am sorry to talk about "The Siege"—or any movie—in such couch-bound terms, but consider how Zwick spins his story. The

Peddling fear: Willis and Washington, tearing up New York City.

F.B.I. agent, his zeal for justice unsullied, springs back into action. He tries to capture the last few terrorists himself, and he works up a powerful rage against the fascist general. He lectures him on civil liberty—he comes right out against torture. It's bad, he says. Torture is bad. He also insists that terrorists will be made happy by the general's shredding of the

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Constitution. "They've won," he says, and the general is abashed.

In other words, "The Siege" offers a far-fetched set of circumstances and then gets all hot under the collar as it criticizes the improbable situation that the movie itself has set up. "The Siege" presents an action that may tempt some people (the roundup of Arab-Americans), and then restores itself to virtue by rejecting that action. My response to this—and maybe it will be many people's response—was first to feel exceptionally queasy during the roundup and then to dismiss the ham-handed civil-liberties lecture as outright hypocrisy.

Arab-American groups, upset about the film, have announced plans to picket the theatres. Perhaps it is no surprise that they don't "get" the movie—that they find themselves more threatened than reassured by it. In their place, I would feel the same. The comedy of the situation is that Edward Zwick insists that he's been misunderstood. Zwick's earlier movies include "Glory," which chronicled the exploits of the first black regiment in the Civil War, and "Courage Under Fire," which gallantly defended the heroism of a female officer in the Gulf conflict. Perhaps Zwick feels that his liberalism and his virtue are now beyond question. He and the screenwriters, Lawrence Wright (a *New Yorker* contributor) and Menno Meyjes, certainly meant to appeal to conscience: the penned Arab-Americans evoke the detained Japanese-Americans during the Second World War, and also Pinochet-era atrocities in Chile, some of which took place in a stadium. Righteous stuff—but does the movie point to a real danger? As far as I know, no one in the government has proposed doing away with habeas corpus or using the Army to occupy an American city, which, in any case, is the worst way imaginable of isolating a group of terrorists. Yes, the movie is a fiction, but is it a necessary fiction? "The Siege" is peddling fear—and perhaps wish fulfillment.

It's true that none of us quite know how to fight a clean fight against enemies who disdain our liberties. And I think it's fair to question the role of Arab-American communities when terrorists live among them. But such tangled, morally dangerous material can best be dramatized on a very small scale—say, in a movie set within a single Arab-American family in Brooklyn. Once you conceive of the movie as a big-budget spectacle with explosions and mangled bodies, and with stars like Bruce Willis and Denzel Washington careering around a frenzied New York, your chances of getting anything straight become much smaller, if not infinitesimal. Edward Zwick the liberal has become Hollywood's fool: moving his tanks and crowds through Brooklyn, spending tens of millions, Zwick, I imagine, became desperate for huge, powerful effects and simply lost control of what he wanted to say. But his intentions no longer matter. What's on the screen is hysterical opportunism presenting itself, nauseatingly, as a stern cautionary tale.

"The Siege" is well made in the meaningless way that many big American action movies are now well made. An explosion knocks over everything in the vicinity; you can almost feel the shock waves. The editing (by Steven Rosenblum) is superb, the pace unrelenting. Bruce Willis, who does smirking, supercool nonacting, and Denzel Washington, who works up a towering rage, don't seem to be living on the same planet, but Annette Bening, as a morally ambiguous C.I.A. agent who maintains complicated relations with the terrorists, is sexy and duplicitous, like a forties good-bad girl. (Welcome back to wickedness, grifter.) Bening's character leads us into a subplot rattling around in the basement—a tale of "blowback," which is the tendency of Islamic warriors trained by Americans to turn against their former masters. But none of this is developed well enough to make much sense, and when "The Siege" tries to warn us against our own worst impulses it does little except put those impulses into play. I wish to God the protest groups and the media would simply let "The Siege" die as quick a death as possible. If this meddling, confused, foolish movie were to stir up real trouble, the foolishness would be compounded into insanity.

"BLACK, black, I must have more black!" So one imagines Shekhar Kapur, the director of "Elizabeth," shouting on the set. This grisly, flamboyant account of the Virgin Queen's early days as a monarch has been made with the extravagant panache of a fashion magazine launching an experimental issue. There are some lovely outdoor scenes, but most of the

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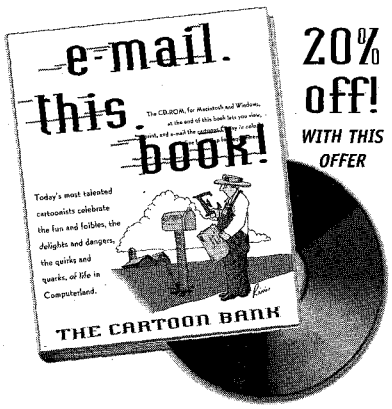

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"The e-mail isn't functioning—pass it on."

movie was shot indoors and in varying shades of sable, ebony, and coal—dark and darker still. The mannerist, color-coördinated effects approach Grand Guignol: In the throne room of Queen Mary Tudor, Elizabeth's cancerous and hate-filled predecessor, the many torches affixed to the walls give no light. England's great cathedrals, inky and troubled, conceal sinister popish plots; everyone is playing some deep game. "Elizabeth" begins with three Protestants being burned at the stake, and features such exercises in statecraft as throat slashings, self-flagellation, torture by fire, and death by poisoned dress. (Ah, the old poisoned-dress trick: the treated fabric attacks the flesh.) In all, the movie would seem to be more Jacobean than Elizabethan, though the language, updated and simplified, is mainly very plain. The filmmakers clearly hoped to accomplish with "visuals" what the great playwrights accomplished with wit. They can't pull it off; "Elizabeth," which jumps from one climax to another, is often just lurid.

Yet I can't say that I was bored. The screenwriter, Michael Hirst, altering and conflating events that took place over many years, uses the religious wars and court intrigues of the sixteenth century as the background for Elizabeth's transformation from young woman to mature leader. By degrees, Elizabeth, a Protestant surrounded by powerful Catholics, realizes that she can take control of the country only by pulling off a kind of internal coup d'état. The means of her ascension is Sir Francis Walsingham (Geoffrey Rush), a perfect Machiavel who serves the Queen as adviser, deadly assassin, and spy. But Elizabeth's climb to power is at the same time a personal disaster. When we first see her, she could be the heroine of a period love lyric—a fair and supple-waisted maiden, with long red hair and pale eyes. Cate Blanchett, the young Australian actress ("Oscar and Lucinda") has a quality of translucence not seen in movies since the early days of Liv Ullmann. She flirts enchantingly with Joe Fiennes (brother of Ralph), who plays the slender and ardent Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester and Elizabeth's lover. Over time, Blanchett stiffens her carriage and becomes willful and harsh. Elizabeth shrugs off proposals of marriage, casts away Robert Dudley, who may or may not be treacherous (his game is so deep that no one in the audience will fathom it), and quite consciously creates what a later age would call a mystique. Her face whitened by paste, a wig mounted on her head, she emerges from youth in the armor of a thick brocade dress. In the end, this horror film masquerading as a historical pageant goes from black to a dazzling and annihilating white—the Queen turns herself into a frightening ghost, and nails herself to her cross of power.

ROBERTO BENIGNI, the longtime star of Italian movies, theatre, and television, is so narrow in the shoulders that he turns every suit he wears into a de-facto zoot. When Benigni opens his mouth wide, his big teeth form a donkey's grin, but something startling appears in his eyes—the light of victory. Benigni has played con men and petty thieves, but there is nothing furtive or sheepish about him. His voice is trumpeting and implacable; he talks constantly, and when he has to fake his way through a dangerous situation he pulls off hypercharged gibberish, like Danny Kaye in the midst of an elocutionary seizure. I love this happy, noisy, virile clown, and I wish that I could say that his much honored film "Life Is Beautiful" was anything but a mistake. Benigni has attempted a fable of comedy's redemptive power. He plays an Italian Jew who keeps alive his little boy's innocence in a Nazi concentration camp by pretending that the routines of the camp are no more than an intricate game staged for the boy's benefit. After all, Benigni appears to be saying, the Germans were playing games and indulging a fantasy, too—the fantasy of total control. But Benigni's ironic counter-reality undermines the movie, rather than the Nazis, who were beyond ridicule for the same reason that they were beyond rationality. Totalitarianism makes the fantastic literal—that is its demonic appeal. You don't create a world inside a concentration camp; it creates a world inside you, and I left the movie thinking that what's touching is not Benigni's ministrations to the little boy but his own need to believe in comedy as salvation. ♦

IT'S ABOUT TIME DEPARTMENT

[*Headline in the Mexico City Times*]

YEAR 200
COMPUTER
BUG TEST

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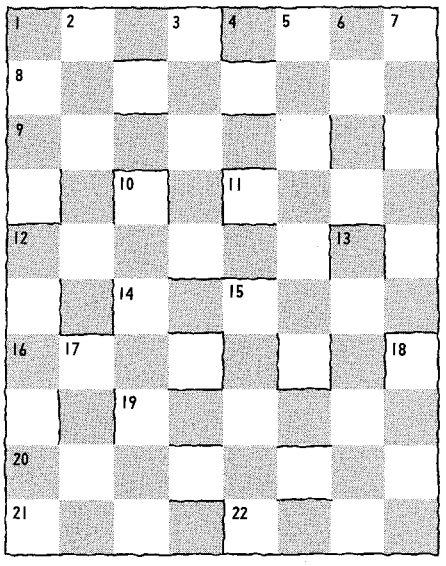
8×10 CRYPTIC

NO. 66 BY FRASER SIMPSON



ACROSS

1 At hearing, take pictures (4)
4 Platonic letters Mrs. Kennedy read aloud (4)
8 Curse a famous conductor with North American retrospective (8)
9 Peeping Tom cut out last half of trip to Europe (6)
11 Risk by a kind of blocker (4)
12 Resident in fleabag has tourists horrified (6)
14 Not well employed? (6)
16 Enormous pole in tank (4)
19 Edges away from spangled horse (6)
20 Huge loss in fuel (8)
21 Lioness slaughtered seal (4)
22 Entertain crowd (4)

DOWN

1 Don't use Second Avenue (4)
2 One hug could be sufficient (6)
3 Retract leases on a monument (5)
5 Skeptic present at involuntary movement (7)
6 Part of concomitant drop (4)
7 Mother sadly returned greeting (6)
10 Carves "XXX" on city trains (7)
12 Commercial comes with sexual-immorality warning (6)
13 Sports venues write up more reasonable article (6)
15 Bugs printed with hot pink (5)
17 Army truant reported a barrier (4)
18 Vigorously beat untanned hide (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 65 appears on page 97. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. For an electronic version, send an E-mail to puzzleguide@newyorker.com.

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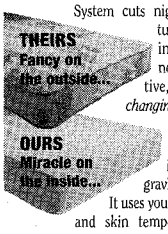

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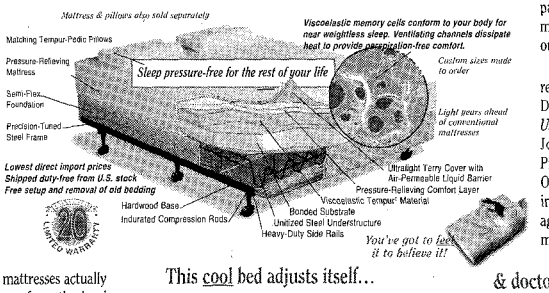

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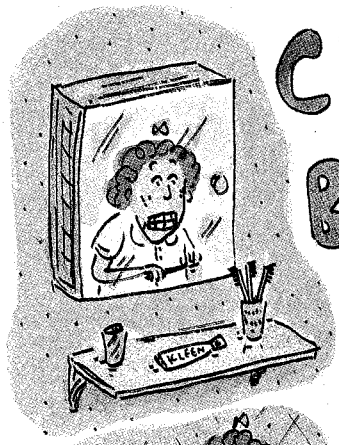
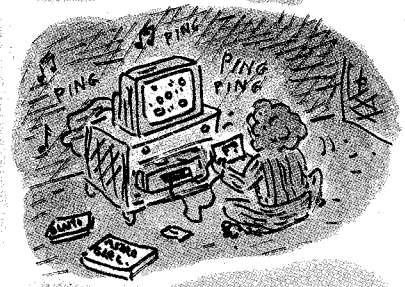
THE BACK PAGE

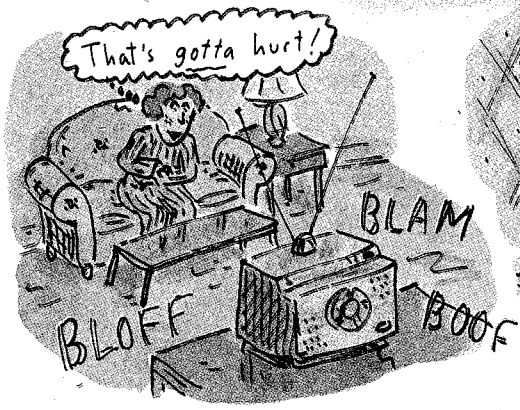
BY ROZ CHAST

CHILDREN'S DREAM BEDTIME ROUTINE



7:30 - 8	Brush teeth; wash hands and face.
8 - 8:30	Get school stuff ready for next day.
8:30 - 9	Put pajamas on.
9 - 11	Watch sitcoms.
11 - 11:30	Watch pro wrestling.
11:30 - 12	Say good night to pets.
12 - 12:30	Midnight snack.
12:30 - 1	Video games.
1 - 1:30	Get into bed.
1:30 - 2:30	Reading hour.
2:30 - 3	Water break.
3 - 4	Read-aloud story time.
4 - 4:30	Last-minute fear assuaging.
4:30	Lights out.





R. Chast

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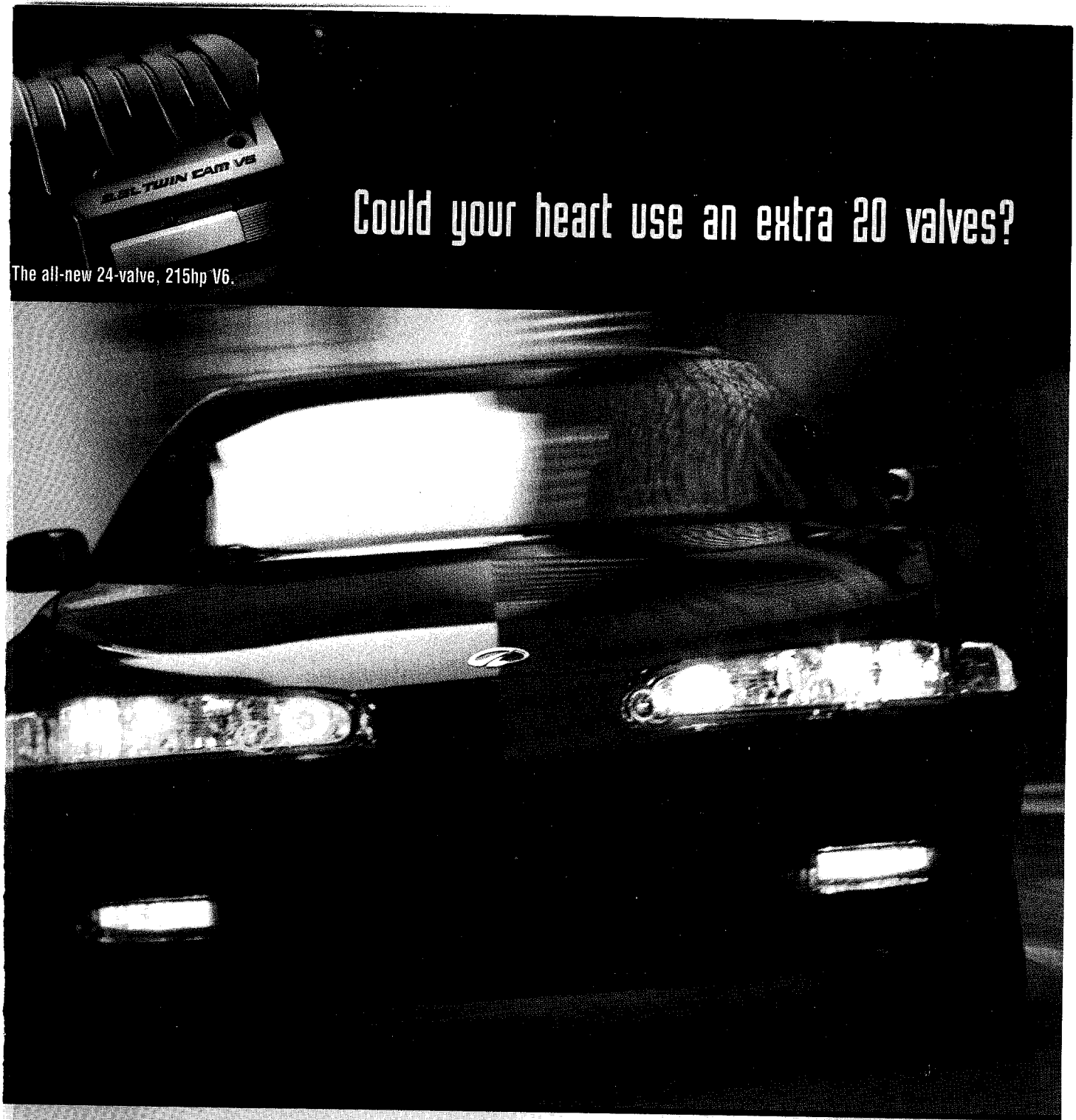

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